

THE INDEPENDENT

2928

THURSDAY 7 MARCH 1996

40p (IR 45p)

Why a Nazi gunman ran amok

Play Formula 1 Dream Team

Cliff, the rock of ages



Section Two, cover story

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Care in the community

He went berserk and stabbed his mother 43 times with a 12-inch Bowie knife. When his 11-year-old brother tried to intervene, he stabbed him 25 times before clubbing them both with an iron bar. Later, he said: 'It was inevitable'



Victim: Smith killed his mother Gwendoline after a row

GLENDIA COOPER

A judge yesterday highlighted how the Government's "care in the community" policy had turned into a nightmare when a paranoid schizophrenic discharged himself from hospital and a month later stabbed his mother and young brother to death in a frenzied attack.

At Nottingham Crown Court Anthony Smith, 24, pleaded guilty to manslaughter with diminished responsibility and was ordered to be detained in Rampton secure hospital indefinitely.

The judge, Mr Justice Latham, sought a review of the circumstances in which he received "care in the community", saying that the case presented "the nightmare that those who care for people with schizophrenia must fear".

Smith was diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic in July 1993 and had been a patient at Derby City General Hospital for less than a month before discharging himself and returning home with the approval of his consultant, Dr Sarah Barrett. At home he stopped taking medication.

A month later, after an argument with his mother, Gwendoline, he said he had "just gone berserk" and stabbed her 43 times with a 12in serrated Bowie knife. When his 11-year-old half-brother David tried to intervene he stabbed him 25 times, before clubbing them with an iron bar.



Frenzied attacker: Anthony Smith

Smith cleaned the knife, showered and changed his clothes. He then left a note on his brother's body, saying: "I am sorry David, I love you," before locking up the house and handing himself in at his local medical centre. He told staff there: "It was inevitable".

Ordering Smith to be detained indefinitely, the judge said: "This is a case where the circumstances of this young man's release into the community, and perhaps more importantly, the circumstances of the care that he was given in the community, will have to be looked at with great care." His adoptive father, Peter Smith, said

yesterday: "I knew something was going to happen from what I was learning about the illness. There was nobody else to help. It was down to me. I had nowhere else to turn. I don't want this to happen to somebody else, to some other family."

"I have nothing to say to [Anthony] any more. I have said what I wanted to say and that is it. As far as I am concerned... I have lost both my sons."

Southern Derbyshire Health Trust said an inquiry would be held into the case but that an internal review had found "no major breakdowns" in the care given. Dr Barrett, who is now on maternity leave, will not face disciplinary action.

[Anthony] Smith was keen to return home and the consultant felt that he was ready to return to an environment where he had lived safely for 25 years, providing he took medication regularly and agreed to out-patient follow-up, said a spokesman. "The acts committed were totally unexpected."

But Jayne Zito, of the Zito Trust, said the case left the Government with "blood on its hands". Mrs Zito, whose husband, Jonathan, was killed by schizophrenic Christopher Clunis, in December 1992, said: "We would hope the inquiry goes one step further to show where there has been negligence in the care. How can they say there has been no major breakdown in care when two people have been killed?"



Victim: Half-brother David, stabbed 25 times

Top judge declares war on Howard

HEATHER MILLER
Home Affairs Correspondent

The smouldering row between the Home Secretary and the judiciary erupted into open warfare last night when Britain's senior judge launched an unprecedented assault on government criminal justice policy.

Lord Taylor of Gostforth, the Lord Chief Justice, accused the Government of introducing a torrent of ill-conceived, hasty and contradictory legislation - and he warned that it was in danger of undermining public confidence in the justice system.

Criminal law at the heart of society "should not be subject to arbitrary change by the powers that be, or to the vagaries of fashion", he said.

And, in one of the most withering speeches in what has become a long-running feud between Britain's most respected judges and ministers, Lord Taylor said flatly that Michael Howard's new proposals for tougher sentences for violent and hardened criminals "would not work".

Lord Taylor has always been careful to steer clear of judicial involvement in politics and personal criticisms of ministers, but last night's lecture to King's College, London - although carefully worded - sets him in head-on confrontation with recent Conservative criminal justice policy, and in particular that of Mr Howard. On top of the changes in the law, courts have been overwhelmed, Lord Taylor said, by management reviews, which "add to the per- vading sense of frenzy and uncertainty".

Last night, clearly worried about the attack and anxious to diffuse the situation, Mr Howard declined a personal response and confrontation. Instead at the end of a day of Home Office speculation about the contents of Lord Taylor's speech, he instead sanctioned a statement from officials. A spokesman said: "The Government has a duty to protect the public, to change the law in order to achieve that" and the statement set out a point-by-point defence of Mr Howard's proposals for a tough new sentencing regime for violent offenders, repeat burglars and drugs dealers. Last night, Mr Howard took some comfort from senior police who had leapt to his side saying that magistrates and judges were "clearly erring on the side of leniency".

But Lord Taylor said the proposals would lead to injustice, would take away any incentive for an offender to plead guilty and clog up the courts - and might just make violent offenders, knowing they face a life sentence, murder their victim and only witness. "In my experience, having spent the best part of 40 years representing, prosecuting and passing judgment on criminals, I have no doubt that what primarily deters crime is the likelihood of detection."

Delivering his lecture "Continuity and Change in the Criminal Law", Lord Taylor asked: "In stark terms, I wonder whether a repeat rapist, faced with an automatic life sentence, will not think it less risky to cut his losses by killing the only witness to his crime?"

Lord Taylor's criticisms come

after detailed study of the Government's proposals and after a succession of other senior judicial figures - past and present - have voiced their concern.

But, made after consultation with other senior judges, they will inevitably rattle the Conservative front and back benches, where some Ministers and MPs have long been "gunning" for judges after a series of humiliations in the courts - only yesterday Mr Howard was castigated by a judge for his handling of the case of the Saudi dissident Muhammad al-Masari. They also feel judges' "lenient" sentences have been thwarting the Government's fight against crime and that the judiciary is interfering too much in policy.

But Lord Taylor said the last six years have seen more Criminal Justice Acts than in the previous 60. "Criminal justice law is threatening to become an annual event. Like the budget, we are no longer surprised it is happening we are merely curious to know what is going to be changed this year."

He said that recently the law on corroboration, the right to silence, and committal proceedings had been changed; sentencing policy had swung from one extreme to the other, and rules on hearsay and the withholding of previous convictions from the jury were under threat. "It is not just the volume of legislation which has become alarming, with each successive Criminal Justice Act treading on the last one's heels. It is also the haste with which each is prepared."



Jubilant: Senator Bob Dole and his wife, Elizabeth

Dole in pole position for Republican ticket

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

Senator Bob Dole yesterday emerged as the prohibitive favourite to win the Republican nomination to face President Clinton this autumn, as two of his rivals dropped out and polls showed him far ahead in key primaries in the next 10 days.

After his eight-state sweep on "Junior Tuesday", the Kansas senator has taken an imposing lead in delegates to the San Diego convention. He has 276 to just 69 for his closest rival, the publishing magnate Steve Forbes, and 51 pledged to Pat Buchanan, the third remaining contender. His signs trained on Mr Clinton, Mr Dole yesterday urged his party to put the divisive primary struggle behind it and focus on the White House.

Announcing their withdrawals, both Lamar Alexander, the former Tennessee governor, and Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana, backed Mr Dole. Even Mr Buchanan, campaigning in Florida, acknowledged a Dole nomination "seems inevitable".

A poll yesterday on the eve of the New York primary showed Mr Dole had widened his lead in the state over Mr Forbes to 48 per cent to 19 per cent, with Mr Buchanan in third place with 15 per cent.

In Texas, the second highest state after California and the key prize of "Super Tuesday", Mr Dole leads Mr Buchanan by a two to one margin. He received a further boost yesterday with the endorsement of the state's popular governor, George Bush Jr, son of the former president.

IRA 'ready to fight for a further 25 years'

DAVID MCKITTRICK
and COLIN BROWN

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams has passed on a belated message from one of the IRA's leaders: "We sued for peace, the British wanted war. If that's what they want we will give them another 25 years of war."

The starkness of the threat was, however, tempered by accompanying statements that the IRA is prepared to consider another ceasefire if Sinn Fein is guaranteed entry into inclusive negotiations without preconditions.

The threat, together with the assertion that there would be no surrender of IRA weapons under any circumstances, led some observers to view the IRA comments as slamming the door to peace.

Ian Paisley's Democratic Ulster Unionist MPs called on President Bill Clinton to withdraw the US entry visa from the Sinn Fein president. "The IRA is declaring war. It is going for the jugular," said Mr Paisley. Peter Robinson, Mr Paisley's deputy, said: "The British Government has a right to expect President Clinton to withdraw the visa for Adams."

Government sources played down the threat by Mr Adams, pointing out that it contradicted the earlier statements by Sinn Fein leaders offering to per-

suade the IRA leadership to restore the ceasefire. Some observers, however, pointed to the more conciliatory comments as hopeful signs.

SDLP leader John Hume said he was encouraged by the mention of the possibility of another ceasefire.

The Irish foreign affairs minister, Dick Spring, described the mention of 25 years as unhelpful, but said the meeting between the IRA and Mr Adams had taken place before last week's Anglo-Irish summit which had set a date for all-party talks.

The account of the IRA's meeting with Mr Adams and Mr Hume appears in an article written by Mr Adams in the New York-based Irish Voice.

According to Mr Adams, the IRA indicated that its cessation of violence had been undermined by the absence of negotiations, which the IRA had believed would begin within three months of the October 1994 ceasefire.

Mr Adams added: "They made it clear that while the cessation was ended, they were prepared to restore it, but in the absence of a viable alternative their commitment was to continue their campaign."

Mr Adams reported verbatim a number of comments from the IRA leaders. One was: "There will be no surrender of IRA weapons under any circum-

stances and to anyone. Disarmament of all the armed groups is only viable as part of a negotiated settlement and nobody knows that better than the British. We will accept no preconditions whatsoever."

Other comments included: "We know the conflict has to be ended but this requires a real peace settlement... I have given most of my life to this struggle. I want to see it ended. I know the effects of armed struggle. If there is an alternative I'm all for it."

Another IRA leader said: "The Brits should know by now that we are serious. When we say we want to make peace they shouldn't mess."

Relations between the Ulster Unionists and the Government reached a new low yesterday after a row between David Trimble, the leader of the official Ulster Unionists and Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, which threatened John Major's working majority in the Commons.

Mr Trimble accused Sir Patrick of "disgraceful behaviour" for accusing the Ulster Unionists of seeking a deal before they voted against the Government in last week's Commons debate on the Scott report. Attacking Sir Patrick for being "mendacious", Mr Trimble said relations between the Government and the Ulster Unionists were "at rock bottom".

IN BRIEF

Prize lottery

Camelot, the National Lottery organiser, announced players who choose three correct numbers can no longer count on a £10 consolation prize. Page 3

Today's weather

Mainly dry and bright but there will be some wintry showers in eastern areas. It will feel rather colder than in recent days. Section Two, page 25



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"I'm not a crook."



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Doctors lambast intensive care plan

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

Government plans to boost emergency and intensive care were yesterday greeted with derision by doctors' leaders, patients' groups, and managers, who said that the proposals would resolve little without new funding.

To reassure the public after a series of high-profile cases sparked concern over adequate provision, Stephen Dorrell,

Secretary of State for Health, unveiled new guidelines and promised new reports this year on specific action being taken by health authorities.

Better management of existing facilities was the key, he said. He promised another Patients Charter for casualty departments and a review of emergency care outside hospitals.

He warned health authorities that their commitment to paediatric intensive care (PIC) is to be reviewed immediately.

Mr Dorrell said the issues raised by the report earlier this week into the death of 10-year-old Nicholas Geldhard would have to be addressed. He said that the report had revealed "important failures in the service he received".

Nicholas was ferried between four hospitals in the search for vital treatment, after being refused admission to PIC units in Manchester, Liverpool, and Sheffield because they had no beds.

The Secretary of State backed the expansion of the High Dependency Units (HDUs), an intermediate level of care which would free up more IC beds.

Mr Dorrell's statement to the Commons yesterday will push critical care higher up the health service agenda, following scores of cases in which patients were transported hundreds of miles to find beds, were refused admission, or forced to wait on trolleys in hospital corridors.

Critics say without extra funding, improvements will be erratic. They point to the increase in emergency admissions, up 13 per cent since 1992.

Harriet Harman, Labour's spokeswoman on health, accused Mr Dorrell of failing to address the real cause of the crisis, a shortage of beds and specialist staff.

"It is a disgusting insult to doctors who agonise as they have to turn away desperately ill patients, for the Secretary of

State to accuse them of misusing intensive-care beds," she said. The Intensive Care Society says there is a shortfall of 500 IC beds. The Government maintains that there are 2,500, although the figure includes coronary-care beds.

Sir Leslie Turnbull, president of the Royal College of Physicians, agreed that there were "insufficient intensive-care beds". He criticised new guidelines on the admission to, and discharge from, IC and HDUs.

James Johnson, chairman of the British Medical Association's Consultants' Committee, said Government proposals had to be backed by new resources.

Mr Johnson said operations were being cancelled because of a lack of beds. Earlier this week it was revealed that the liver of Ecstasy-victim Leah Betts was sent to Spain after two British transplant centres had turned it down, because although they had suitable patients, they had no IC beds.

IN BRIEF

Budget crisis

decision put off

Councillors in Liverpool postponed their crisis budget meeting till the last possible moment as they sought a way to bridge a £44m shortfall without cutting more than 800 jobs.

Unions are threatening industrial action if the council imposes compulsory redundancies, and several hundred angry council workers lobbied the town hall. The councillors agreed to adjourn until 10.30am on Sunday, with a midnight deadline by which they have to set their budget for 1996-97.

Drivers fleeced

Motorists can pay twice as much for spare parts from franchised dealers, Which? magazine found. Volkswagen's parts for a Golf 1.6CL were nearly four times dearer than could be bought independently. Ford's prices were 69 per cent higher for brake pads and 50 per cent higher for fuel pumps.

New death probe

Two High Court judges quashed a verdict of accidental death and ordered a fresh inquest into the case of a man who hit his head in a fall but was kept overnight in a police cell because an ambulance crew thought he was drunk. John O'Reilly, 64, from Coventry, died later in hospital.

Brady bid fails

The Moors murderer Ian Brady lost a claim that newspaper photographs of him in a maximum security hospital invaded his privacy. Mr Justice Jowitt refused his High Court application to challenge a Press Complaints Commission ruling that the photographs in *The Sun* were in the public interest.

Tower jobs safe

The jobs of warders at the Tower of London and other Historic Royal Palace workers will not be privatised. Tenders had been sought but the Government decided that none of the private companies bidding for the work could deliver the services cost-effectively and to the high standards required.

21-hour lift ordeal

Firefighters released a 28-year-old woman from a lift in which she had been trapped for 21 hours. The woman had been working alone at an office in Cheshire in the City of London. She was discovered when her worried husband went there and heard her cries for help.

PC murder trial

The first policeman in Britain to be charged with murder on duty was committed for trial at the Old Bailey on April 17. Metropolitan Police marksman Patrick Hodgson, 48, is accused of shooting chauffeur David Ewin, 38, in south London on February 28, 1995. He died in hospital two weeks later.

Matching inflation

British couples will spend an average £9,247 each to get married this year, up £594 on last year. There will be an estimated 300,000 weddings in 1996, the typical couple having been engaged for 22 months with the bride 26 and the groom 28, according to the annual survey by Wedding and Home magazine.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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Right fumes at support for Patten

DONALD MACINTYRE
Political Editor

A leader of the backbench Tory right protested yesterday at John Major's openly stated enthusiasm for bringing Chris Patten, Governor of Hong Kong, back to the highest levels of the party.

The rumblings started as Mr Major told BBC Radio's *Today* programme that politics would be "the stronger and more effective" if his "dear friend" Mr Patten "were to come back and take his proper place in it and I personally hope that he will".

And Mr Major identified Mr Patten as a potential contender for the party leadership. "When the time comes for me to stand down, there are a number of colleagues of outstanding ability who would have a legitimate claim to be leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister. Were Chris Patten back, he would certainly be among that number."

This provoked a response by John Townsend, chairman of the 92 Group of right-wing backbench MPs. He echoed private complaints by other right-wingers dismissive about the idea of Mr Patten, who lost his Bath seat in the general election, becoming leader.

Last weekend Mr Patten made clear he was considering a return to British politics when

his Hong Kong post expires in June next year, more than a month after the last possible date for an election. He and Mr Major have made it clear there is no question of this happening before the election.

Mr Townsend told BBC Radio 4: "It is unlikely the party would pick as its leader somebody who didn't fight the next election. The Conservative Party has now got to be led from the centre-right and clearly Chris Patten is centre-left. One right-wing backbencher said it would be 'barmy' to treat Mr Patten as a potential leader."

The dispute coincided with speculation about a summer reshuffle. MPs close to Sir Patrick Mayhew - who, some Tories have suggested, could quit as Northern Ireland Secretary, sparking off a July reshuffle - were sceptical about whether he was likely to go before the general election, with political negotiations in their delicate state. One source said the only plausible circumstances in which he would do so was if it was obvious a long-term settlement was in sight. The source also suggested Sir Patrick had recently explored with colleagues whether he ought to stand down, given that he is 66. The message had come back that he should not and the source suggested this coincided with his own desires.

Tories split on currency vote

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

John Major will today attempt to resolve a Cabinet split over a referendum on the European single currency amid a growing threat of a rebellion by Tory Euro-sceptic MPs.

The Prime Minister had a meeting last night with Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, who is holding the line against a pledge to allow a referendum on a single currency. Other senior Cabinet ministers believe a referendum is the only way to defuse a Tory backbench revolt over Europe.

Brian Mawhinney, the chairman of the Conservative Party, warned senior Cabinet colleagues at a meeting earlier this week that a clear line on the referendum had to be taken. But the split in the Cabinet was too deep to resolve the issue.

The party chairman is becoming exasperated because he has to write to all Conservative MPs to tell them what line to adopt over challenges they have received from Sir James Goldsmith, who is threatening to put up independent candidates against them at the election, unless they back a referendum.

Lord Lawson, the former Chancellor, last night called for the Cabinet to make a clear announcement now that it would allow a referendum.

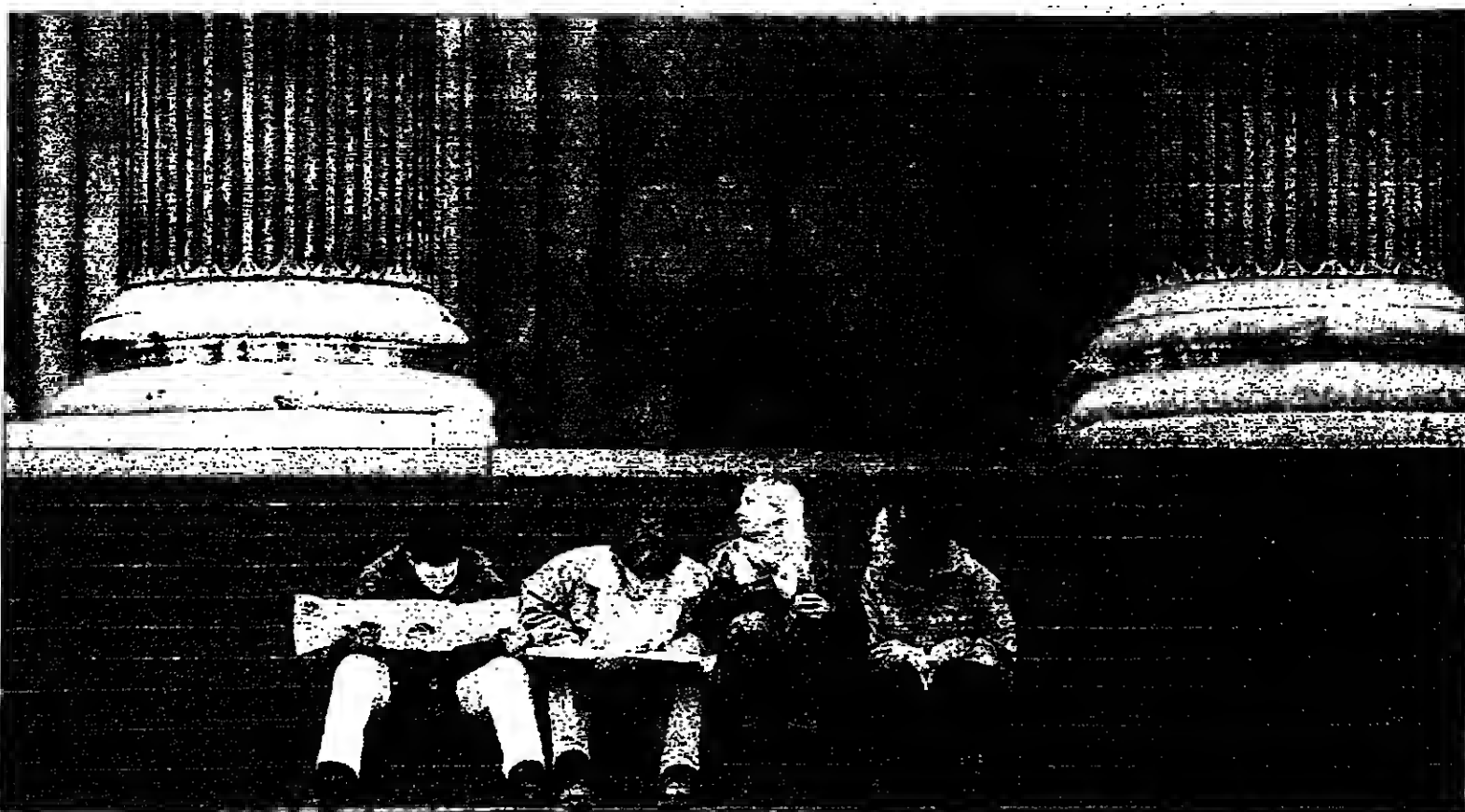
Mr Major is keen to smooth over the differences without pushing Mr Clarke to use his veto in the Cabinet against a referendum. But senior ministers said last night that they were playing for very high stakes.

"It has been forced back onto the agenda. It is a very live issue," said one ministerial source. The Whips have told the Government that a referendum would help to defuse the threat of a defeat next Thursday in the vote on the White Paper on the EU Intergovernmental Conference.

There is growing unrest among Tory Euro-sceptic MPs who have been angered by Mr Clarke's remarks over a single currency, a proposal by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, for a foreign affairs spokesman for Europe, and the European Court of Justice ruling enabling Spanish fishermen to sue for £30m compensation for being barred from British waters.

Some MPs are threatening to rebel when the White Paper is put to the vote next Thursday.

IRA bombings: Hotels hit by cancellations as Americans stay clear of danger



Capital appeal: A group of young tourists taking a break on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral in London yesterday

Photograph: Edward Webb

Tourism pays for return of terror

CLARE GARNER

The resumption of IRA violence has hit hotel bookings in London, casting a shadow over the British Tourist Authority's disclosure yesterday that a record number of overseas visitors came to Britain last year.

A total of 23.6 million tourists - 12 per cent more than the previous high of 21 million set in 1994 - came to Britain in

1995 and spent a record £11.7bn, up 18 per cent on 1994. These figures were boosted by a big rise in visitors from North America - up by 10 per cent to a record 3.9 million.

The collapse of the ceasefire, however, throws doubt on whether these trends are set to continue. Many London hotels suffered cancellations during the recent spate of bombings and some say they have yet to

recover business. Bookings at the Britannia International, close to last month's IRA bomb in Docklands, are down. General manager Eric Lucht said: "We had a 20-25 per cent cancellation rate at the time of the bombings, particularly from the American market. Now we have a 30 per cent reduction in bookings."

Gillian McLorian, reservations supervisor for the Grosvenor House Hotel, said: "At the time we had cancellations and didn't pick up ad hoc bookings as we usually would. We are not as busy as we would expect for April."

The Forte Crest Hotel, in Regents Park, central London, had 10 cancellations after the first bomb. "Funnily enough it mostly seems to be the Americans and Britons," a spokeswoman said.

The London Tourist Board admitted that if the bombing campaign was kept up it would damage the market. "We know that tourism was up during the ceasefire," said LTB press officer Louise Wood.

"We've recently had three incidents. If that happened again it certainly wouldn't be good for tourism but it's difficult to put a price on it and assess what it might do."

The London Tourist Board admitted that if the bombing campaign was kept up it would damage the market. "We know that tourism was up during the ceasefire," said LTB press officer Louise Wood.

"We've recently had three incidents. If that happened again it certainly wouldn't be good for tourism but it's difficult to put a price on it and assess what it might do."

Dry run for Docklands blast

The IRA rehearsed the Docklands bombing, which ended the ceasefire, before the Government announced plans for elections in Northern Ireland, writes Will Bennett.

The news of elections was widely blamed for derailing the peace process, but terrorists carried out a dummy run with the Ford lorry eventually used to carry the bomb more than three weeks before it exploded in London on 9 February.

Scotland Yard said yesterday that an IRA team arrived on a ferry at Stranraer in Scotland on 15 January and are thought to have driven the lorry along the

route which they took to carry out the attack at South Quay, which killed two people and injured over a hundred. They returned to Ireland the next day.

Commander John Grieve, head of Scotland Yard's Anti-Terrorist Branch, said yesterday: "Because it was under its complete, final, covert identity, it looks that it was a reconnaissance or dummy run to see how far they could get away with it."

Speculation suggested that the bombing was the IRA's response to John Major's announcement that elections would be held. The plan, unveiled by the Government fol-

lowing the Mitchell Report on the peace process, was blamed for provoking an end to the ceasefire.

But the Mitchell Report, which said there was no realistic prospect of the paramilitaries agreeing to the Government's demand to give up their weapons before all-party talks, was published on 24 January.

The dummy run, more than a week before, shows that IRA contingency plans to bomb London were more advanced than previously thought. They may have planned to end the ceasefire regardless of the Government's reaction to the report.

US ambassador slated over Adams visa row

RUPERT CORNWELL and ALAN MURDOCH

Jean Kennedy Smith, Washington's Ambassador to Ireland, has been reprimanded by Secretary of State Warren Christopher for punishing two diplomats who opposed her decision in January 1994 to recommend that a US entry visa be granted to Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin president.

Ms Kennedy Smith defended herself yesterday saying that she had always encouraged a "frank discussion" of policy issues among embassy staff.

However, the State Department said that if the bombing campaign was kept up it would damage the market. "We know that tourism was up during the ceasefire," said LTB press officer Louise Wood.

"We've recently had three incidents. If that happened again it certainly wouldn't be good for tourism but it's difficult to put a price on it and assess what it might do."

Cheesemakers choked by Brussels food ruling

KATHERINE BUTLER
Brussels

New food rules agreed by the European Commission yesterday will mean that Scotch beef must come from Scotland, Newcastle Brown Ale from Tyneside and only the original producers of Siltan will be allowed to market cheese by that name.

The agreement gives protected status to over 300 tradi-

tional items of food and drink, but it has thrown the Danish dairy industry into chaos by ruling that Greeks and Greeks alone, can make feta cheese.

As a concession to the Danes, who mass-produce the crumbly white cheese, they will still be allowed to export their imitation cows' milk feta to markets outside the European Union. Within the EU, only cheese made in Greece from the

milk of local ewes or goats will be allowed to call itself feta.

Under the scheme, Parma ham, which also has numerous imitators, will not only have to come from animals raised and slaughtered in Parma but must also be sliced and packed in Northern Italy. Parmesan cheese too will have to be grated and packed in the region, unless the slicing or grating is done in the shop where customers can

see for themselves that it is the genuine product.

The British government submitted 33 foods linked to specific geographical regions for registration and 26 of them have been included. The commission said it was still vetting applications for a further seven items including Cornish yarg cheese, Whitstable oysters and Dorset knob biscuits.

However, Britain's best

known cheese, Cheddar, has been deemed so famous that it has lost any unique link with its original home in Somerset. The same goes for French Brie and Camembert, Holland's Edam and Gouda and Swiss Emmentaler which the commission said anyone can now manufacture.

Two countries, Sweden and Ireland, could not think of a single item of food or drink they wanted to claim as their own.

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Add dimensions to your business

Literary memorabilia: A sampler embroidered by a young Jane Austen in 1797 being displayed by a cataloguer at Phillips auction house. Charlotte Jenkins. The sampler was made when Austen, author of *Pride and Prejudice*, was 22 and bears the psalm, 'Praise The Lord O My Soul' and flowering trees in green and plum silk. It is up for sale on 19 March and is expected to fetch £400-500. Photograph: Tony Buckingham

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Smoking and medicine: World-wide profits from cigarette sales continue to grow as doctors warn of Britain's new health crisis

Lung disease 'time-bomb' threatens the young

100 billion cigarettes a week: BAT's sales around the world



LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

Lung disease among Britain's young is now a major health problem, doctors warned yesterday. A new study has revealed that up to half the children under five suffer from acute coughing and wheezing.

The wide-ranging review of lung disease at the end of the 20th century, published by the British Lung Foundation, highlights the growing threat of tuberculosis, occupational asthma, and the toll still taken by smoking-related diseases.

"Lung disease in babies and children may be a time-bomb waiting to explode," said Michael Silverman, a professor of child health at Leicester University, at the launch of the Lung Report yesterday.

"Urgent research is needed into wheezing in the very young. This may be the period when the seeds of long term lung problems are sown," he added. However, the report focuses

mainly on the young and reveals that a quarter of all admissions to children's wards are for lung problems. During winter months, GPs and hospital services are "overwhelmed" by demand from children with acute respiratory infections.

The impact of childhood lung disease can also be long-term, according to Professor Silverman. This leads not only to asthma, but also to chronic lung disorders in middle and old age.

Early on, a child's social and educational development can be harmed by regular school absences.

Babies born very prematurely are most vulnerable. A disease known as CLD (chronic lung disease of prematurity) causes breathing problems and affects the ability of children to exercise and to withstand air pollution, possibly with lifelong consequences. Over 30 million antibiotics are prescribed for respiratory infections each year.

The foundation yesterday launched an appeal to fund a

three-year research programme into lung disease in the very young. It also echoes concerns about the provision of paediatric intensive care for children with respiratory problems, citing a national shortage of 72 beds.

The report, by a team of lung specialists, renew calls for a ban on tobacco advertising and says Government targets for cutting smoking and reducing lung cancer cannot be met unless this happens.

Tuberculosis is making a "global comeback," it also reveals. There were around 7,000 new cases diagnosed in Britain last year, with increased poverty and homelessness thought to be factors. New occupational health services are also needed to reduce the number of people who are forced to leave jobs because of occupational asthma, costing the NHS up to £40m a year, the review adds.

The Lung Report: a shadow over the nation's health. British Lung Foundation, 78 Hutton Garden, London EC1N 8JR.

BAT draws on massive Third World craving

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

British tobacco companies are still raking in enormous profits thanks to the insatiable demand for western cigarettes around the developing world. Figures from British American Tobacco (BAT), one of the UK's largest companies, confirmed that countries such as India, China and the former Soviet Union cannot get enough of the weed that the West is increasingly giving up.

Sales of brands like Benson & Hedges, Silk Cut and Lucky Strike soared 18 per cent last year, with BAT selling a total of 670 billion cigarettes in almost every country in the world. That was 100 billion more than in 1994, taking BAT's share of the world tobacco market up to 12.4 per cent.

Global sales of cigarettes reached 5,422 billion sticks in 1995, representing a pack a week for every man, woman and child in the world. Far from reducing over the past 15 years cigarette consumption has actually risen by more than one-quarter since 1980. Industry sources estimate that sales are growing annually by about 1 per cent.

BAT and other British companies such as Imperial Tobacco, which is owned by the giant Hanson conglomerate, are cashing in on that growth. The group's exports last year in-

creased by 11 per cent and it now sells 250 brands, manufacturing in over 50 countries and owning the top-selling brand in 30 markets.

Consumption is dominated by markets which until recently have been closed to outsiders, including traditionally large consumers such as Japan, which has only just dropped the monopoly enjoyed by its state-run cigarette manufacturer.

BAT yesterday reported a 54 per cent rise in tobacco profits. Last year it made £1,561m from cigarette sales, dwarfing the £1,052m it made from its insurance interests, Eagle Star and Allied Dunbar.

The biggest market of all is China, which experts believe accounts for one-quarter of all the cigarettes smoked in the world. BAT's Southampton-made brand State Express 555 is one of the most popular brands there. Demand is so great that the company has had to expand its south-coast manufacturing facilities.

The other prize for western cigarette companies lies in the former Eastern Bloc market. BAT already owns Hungary's best-selling brand, Sopiane, and, recently started from scratch one of Poland's fastest growing labels, Jan III Sobieski. Sportsman sells well in Kenya and Uganda, while Scissors is India's most popular brand.

BAT results, page 19

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news

Masari ejected from own dissident group

JOHN LICHFIELD

Within hours of his legal victory over plans to deport him from Britain, the leading Saudi dissident Mohammed al-Masari has been ejected from his own organisation.

A spokesman for the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights said yesterday that Mr Masari – the man at the centre of the arms-and-bananas row – had been asked to leave after “differences” with his co-founder, Dr Saad Faqih.

Other sources within the organisation suggested that Mr Masari had been fired as the committee’s spokesman for taking too extreme an Islamic view, at the expense of purely Saudi and political concerns.

But this was denied by another source close to the dissident group who said the arguments were “personal and administrative”. “This is just the



Mr Masari: Reconciliation efforts are under way

kind of personality clash and split which all exiled political organisations are subject to from time to time,” the source said. A spokesman for the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights, Abu Haas, said “mediation” was in progress. It was hoped to repair the rift be-

tween the two men within two to three days. One of the mediators is George Galloway, the Labour MP for Glasgow Hillhead, who has championed Mr Masari since he was ordered by the Government to leave Britain for the Caribbean island of Dominica in December.

It was this decision to deport Mr Masari, in response to Saudi pressure, which was challenged on Tuesday at the Immigration Appellate Authority, in north London. Judge David Pearl ordered the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, to reconsider Mr Masari’s claim for political asylum. Judge Pearl accused the Government of trying to “circumvent for diplomatic and trade reasons” its obligations under the UN convention on refugees.

It remained unclear last night why Mr Masari was thrown out of his group so soon after a court ruling. Saudi dissident

sources suggested that his colleagues might have hoped that the British Government was going to do the job for them.

Mr Galloway confirmed yesterday that he was trying to “expedite a reconciliation”. He said the differences were personal but declined to comment further.

The CDLR, the most prominent Saudi opposition group, campaigns for democracy and against alleged corruption in the Saudi royal family. It was formed in 1993 by Mr Masari, 49, a professor of theoretical physics. Dr Faqih, and four other scholars. They left Saudi Arabia for Britain in 1994 after Mr Masari and others were arrested and allegedly tortured.

The British Government said it had decided to expel Mr Masari because his attacks on the Saudi royal family jeopardised billions of pounds in British exports – mainly of arms.

National chooses Nunn but the best



Face of success: Trevor Nunn's work has earned both critical acclaim and huge profits

Photograph: Philip Meech

JOHN MCKIE

Trevor Nunn yesterday put his global success on hold for five years to accept one of the most prestigious jobs in British arts – director of the Royal National Theatre, in London.

Nunn, the 56-year-old director of world-wide box-office hits such as *Cats*, *Les Misérables* and *Sunset Boulevard*, was selected over the younger contenders Sam Mendes, the 30-year old artistic director at the Donmar Warehouse, in London, and Stephen Daldry, 34, who runs the Royal Court theatre, also in London.

In 1968, aged 28, Nunn became the youngest ever artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, where he remained until 1986. His revivals, including *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Porgy and Bess*, received wide critical acclaim.

Nunn, who takes over the £90,000 post from Richard Eyre in September 1997, said: “I’m just breathless with anticipation. It is time to do something in a more focused and concentrat-

ed way and stop this globe-trotting. It’s a thrilling challenge. He was the first choice of a special selection committee, which included the playwright Tom Stoppard and the producer Michael Codron.

Stoppard said yesterday: “He’s very, very likeable as well as being very tough. It’s quite a rare combination of qualities which fits the job perfectly. He’s the best possible outcome at the moment and I’m very relieved and glad he’s agreed to do it.”

Nunn, who has various successful productions around the world and is at present editing his film adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*, is to work for the National Theatre exclusively for five years. He will have to negotiate government subsidy, help balance the books and direct the artistic programme at the company’s three theatres – the Olivier, the Lyttelton and the Cottesloe.

Richard Eyre said: “I am absolutely confident that we have the man best qualified to run the National Theatre.”

Refugees ‘forced’ onto the streets

HEATHER MILLS

Home Affairs Correspondent

The withdrawal of welfare benefits from asylum seekers was an unlawful attempt by ministers to deter refugees from seeking sanctuary in the UK, which breached United Nations agreements, a High Court judge was told yesterday.

Since the benefit changes came into force last month 200 asylum seekers have been left penniless on the streets or in emergency night shelters – with more joining them every day – as they wait for the authorities to decide their claim.

Yesterday, Nicholas Blake QC said Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, had abused his powers when he introduced new rules which will affect about 30,000 asylum seekers.

The changes deny benefits to anyone who fails to make a claim the moment he or she enters the UK – even if they

make their way straight to the Home Office on the day of arrival. They also deny benefits to those appealing against an immigration officer’s refusal. As asylum seekers are not allowed to work for six months, they will have no means of survival.

Mr Blake, representing the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, said the removal of benefits was inconsistent with the purpose of social security legislation.

It was, he alleged, motivated by the desire to deter asylum seekers, in breach of Britain’s obligations under the UN Convention on Refugees.

The Government is contesting the claim. It had been due to fight on a double front, but it successfully put off an embarrassing High Court challenge by two London Tory councils by offering to pay 80 per cent of the extra charges the councils will incur by having to house refugee families.

The hearing continues today.

DAILY POEM

Knock Knock

By Alan Brownjohn.

Do I need them? The glasses on my face?
The coat snatched to cover me? Not questions that
I pose
Warm indoors while thinking Nudé is beautiful,
But having unlocked the front door on to space,
And stared out into it to discover all
Of nobody there, and no neighbour to tell me whose

Loud knocking that might have been. I feel quite bold,
Because I don’t shiver... Except, I can’t, my skin
Has suddenly felt content with nothing more
Than taking on, like clothes, the outer cold
— And the notion of re-shutting the opened door
Seems to be receding. With no one to let in,
I could go on standing in the freezing air
While my will to speak or move drained right away.
And the dark fastened hard on my luminous
Nakedness. And then, if I called, “Who’s there?”
And heard — “Bonaparte!” I’d say, “Ridiculous!
Bonaparte qui?” ... “Bon appartement à louer!”

Alan Brownjohn’s poem is one of a feast of contributions to the 35th anniversary issue of the *London Magazine*, under Alan Ross’s fine editorship since 1961, and able to claim publication in various incarnations since 1732, writes Catriona Link. John Fuller, Fiona Sampson, Gavin Ewart (his last poems) and Anthony Thwaite are well represented, but there are, too, essays, reviews, drawings, photographs, travel pieces and tributes from and to Frank Kermode, Thom Gunn, Bert Hardy, R.B. Kitaj and John Tavener, among others. This bi-monthly treasure house in book form cannot be more highly recommended.

Alan Ross has agreed that *Independent* readers may take out subscriptions at a reduced rate of £25 (instead of £28.50) by writing to London Magazine, 30 Thurloe Place, London SW7, and quoting *Independent* Offer.

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politics

Press ruined me, says Aitken

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

Jonathan Aitken, the former Chief Secretary to the Treasury, yesterday accused the press of costing him his ministerial career, causing "enormous damage" to his reputation and putting intense pressure on his family.

Towards the end of his appearance before the Trade and Industry Select Committee inquiry into BMARC, the arms firm where he was once a director, for sending arms to Iran

via Singapore, Mr Aitken turned on the media and Gerald James, his former company chairman.

He claimed Mr James's allegation that he must have been "blind and deaf" not to know the company's guns were going to Iran, supported by "a small fan club" of journalists, had done him great harm.

He was virulent about his former BMARC colleague, "Gerald James should be taken off to the funny farm or he should be put on a charge of perjury, to which he could do doubt

successfully plead diminished responsibility," said Mr Aitken. With his wife, Lolita, sitting behind him, Mr Aitken made an emotional and theatrical appeal to the committee, which has a Conservative majority, to make a "fair, impartial and thorough" assessment of the evidence. He insisted there had been no scandal. "There was no wrongdoing by anyone at BMARC and there was certainly no wrongdoing by me," he said.

Earlier though, Keith Hampson, a Conservative committee member and long-time supporter of Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister and former President of the Board of Trade (it was Mr Heseltine who in a surprise statement to the Commons last summer confirmed the earlier disclosure in the Independent that there was evidence BMARC guns had gone to Iran and invited the committee to investigate) had taken Mr Aitken to task for his recollection of his directorship of BMARC.

Mr Hampson queried Mr Aitken's claim that Project Lisi, the contract to supply 140 naval guns to Singapore, was not mentioned in the BMARC board minutes.

He said that in the minutes for the meeting of 27 June 1989 - which Mr Aitken did not attend, but as a director, he would have received the minutes - the second phase of Lisi, Lisi II, was "mentioned twice in a very prominent way." Lisi II appeared in a list of future sales, which strangely, commented Mr Hampson, otherwise detailed contracts by their country of destination.

Mr Aitken stuck to his claim that he did not recall seeing any reference to Lisi.

Mr Aitken also dismissed suggestions that he should have been suspicious about a small country like Singapore ordering 140 naval cannons.

He accused Granada TV's *World in Action* programme - which he is suing for libel - of "suppressing" an interview with a defence journalist, Paul Beaver, who said it would have been possible for Singapore to have had a genuine use for the guns.

Lord Lawson yesterday lent his authority, as a former Chancellor, to calls by John Major to promise a referendum on any move to join a European single currency.

Party grandees clash over the vote for Europe

- ☐ Lawson urges currency referendum
☐ Clarke enthusiastic on single market

In a very different analysis to that of the current Chancellor, Lord Lawson told the Treasury Select Committee that if the Government decided to join a single currency, then before the Commons voted the issue should be put to the British people in a referendum. "I think realistically a referendum is bound to happen," he said. "It seems to me it would be sensible to make that clear now."

Lord Lawson's comments will be music to the ears of Tory Euro-sceptics who want the Prime Minister to announce a referendum and include the pledge in the party's general election manifesto.

But earlier this week Kenneth Clarke said a referendum need only be considered when and if the Cabinet decided to join. He had claimed the Prime Minister was of the same opinion. The Chancellor, however, is virtually the only Cabinet minister left who will express any sympathy for a single currency. Though Lord Lawson left office in 1989 after six years at 11 Downing Street his doubting view is more prevalent. "The reason I don't wish to see us join is because it is because it is essentially a political enterprise which is at best premature and worst extremely damaging," he said.

"It is likely to be damaging while the peoples of Europe are not in favour of submerging their autonomy and sovereignty and loyalty into a wider European entity. To do so prematurely would be to strain the political and democratic fabric, very, very considerably and give a field day for the most unpleasant national, xenophobic demagogues in every country in Europe."

But the committee, hearing opinions on the final stage of economic and monetary union, was offered a very different scenario by Lord Kingsdown, the former Governor of the Bank of England Robin Leigh-Pemberton. A single currency enthusiast, he disagreed with Lord Lawson's assertion that the project was essentially politically inspired. "I see it as a logical extension of the single market."

The debate had been, too much concentrated on sovereignty and constitutional issues, he said. More attention should be paid to where the jobs were going to come from over the next 20 years. If the day came when Britain had to make a decision and it was clearly put to the people "that our pockets were at stake," he believed there would be a much more pragmatic approach.

Lord Kingsdown thought it was "more likely than not" that a core of countries would go ahead with a single currency.

Inside Parliament

Stephen Goodwin

There was a feeling in Germany and France that there was "a tide in human affairs," and that January 1999 might be the best opportunity. Other members might be the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg.

The former governor warned that a referendum would mean a "period of great difficulty for sterling" when defensive measures would have to be taken.

One solution that is not likely to re-emerge is the "common currency" or "hard Ecu" to run parallel with national currencies which Lord Lawson advocated as Chancellor and was then taken up by his successor, John Major. Lord Lawson said that without warning him, the then Prime Minister, Baroness Thatcher, had told her European partners Britain would be putting forward an alternative plan for monetary union.

"I was faced with the task at very short notice of working one out," he said. Lady Thatcher was able to present her plan, but it was not one he wanted to revive.

Foreign policy is 'sullen and anti-German'

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Political Correspondent

The anti-German attitude of an increasingly Euro-sceptical Conservative Party came under fierce attack last night from Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader.

Denouncing the "sullen xenophobia" driving Government foreign policy in a foreign affairs speech in London, Mr Ashdown said that rebuilding alliances, especially with Germany, was the number one foreign policy task for the next British government.

"One of the worst aspects of Britain's current political debate is that it has become acceptable in Conservative circles to talk about Germany and the Germans in the same tone which English politicians reserved for the Jews 80 years ago and for the Irish a century ago."

"The tone we hear from some who should know better, and from a Europhobic press which supports them, seems tinged with an envious bitterness about a Germany which has regained its place as Europe's strongest economy and established a thriving constitutional democracy."

Earlier, Mr Ashdown and Charles Keoedy, the Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman, predicted that there would be little in next week's White Paper on the Inter-Government Conference that

would induce the party to support the Government when the paper is debated in the House - in contrast to the support it gave during the Maastricht treaty.

The Liberal Democrat leader said in the speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs that since the old foreign policy anchor of the Berlin Wall had come down, "nostalgia mixed with Europhobia has shut off intelligent debate". What was needed was a new international strategy.

Urging the need for "preparing for the day when we Europeans have collectively to manage our own security and defence", with less input from the US, Mr Ashdown said progress towards an effective common foreign and security policy within Europe should be seen as serving Britain's interests, not threatening them.

Britain should also demand radical reform of the United Nations, including a military planning staff to oversee UN peace-keeping operations and the establishment of a pool of UN peace-keepers. It should push for the empty Greenwich Royal Naval College to be used as a UN staff college, he said.

Mr Ashdown emphasised that while he would back EU defence and security decisions made on a majority vote, states should retain a veto on whether to deploy troops.



On a roll: Michael Portillo, Secretary of State for Defence, and Vice-Admiral JIR Tod watching the roll-out of the Anglo-Italian EH101 helicopter at its UK production base in Yeovil, Somerset, yesterday. Photograph: Tim Cuff

Ashby backs move to help gay couples

JOHN RENTOUL
Political Correspondent

David Ashby, the Tory MP who last year lost a libel case involving allegations of homosexuality, voted with Labour to defeat the Government to give gay couples the same right to inherit the tenancy of their homes as heterosexuals.

In a Commons committee on

the Housing Bill, Mr Ashby voted for an amendment put by Glenda Jackson, Labour MP for Hampstead, which would give same-sex partners the right to succeed to a tenancy if they have been living together for more than 12 months and the partner who holds the tenancy dies.

Mr Ashby's switch overturned the built-in Tory majority of one on the committee. Ms

Jackson welcomed the move as a "simple matter of justice", and said she would write to the Prime Minister to ask him to back the committee's decision.

It is likely, however, to be reversed in a vote of the full House of Commons, with the support of the Ulster Unionists, although there could be a further revolt from Tory gay rights supporters such as Edwina Currie and Michael Brown, the only acknowledged gay Tory MP.

Mr Ashby said: "Why should we not allow succession? What is fundamentally wrong? Are not we in a society that is changing? And if it is not changing, should not we in Parliament be changing it?"

Under existing law, only married or heterosexual couples can succeed to tenancies on death.

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Kew's budding revolt
spreads to picket lineBARRIE CLEMENT
Labour EditorChris Kidd might be forgiven for comparing some of his managers to the *Aristolochia Grandiflora*.

According to Mr Kidd, the flower "looks like a toilet, smells disgusting, has the colour of rotting flesh and is pollinated by flies". Mr Kidd, along with 80 of his colleagues at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, is not best pleased with his superiors.

Tomorrow they are staging the first strike since the renowned horticultural centre was established more than 200 years ago.

Mr Kidd is one of the world's leading specialists in the practical propagation of lowland tropical rainforest herbaceous plants and is paid a basic salary of £8,500 a year. With overtime at weekends in the Princess of Wales Conservatory, he makes £11,000 for overseeing the development of 1,600 varieties.

"Management say they want to help us by introducing performance-related pay, but the system they want to introduce will be based on the subjective judgement of line managers. If you don't get on with your line manager, you've had it."

The expert botanists and horticulturists have been offered a basic rise of 0.9 per cent plus performance pay which the GMB general union claims would mean an average 2.5 per cent increase, but management puts the figure at 6.5 per cent.

Union officials have suggested, not without irony, that salaries might be concomitant with growth of the flora for which they are responsible.

In that case Mr Kidd would have done rather well. The flower of his beloved *Aristolochia Grandiflora* was a highly unusual 5ft 6in long. What might push his salary into six figures, however, was his propagation last year of the world's biggest water lily with a diameter of 8ft 7in.

While management hopes to keep the gardens open despite the stoppage, visitors will be faced with a picket line of highly qualified staff.

Most of the youngest specialists have degrees in horticulture, while Mr Kidd, who is 28, is among the older members of staff with six years' experience at Kew, came to the job via the Portsmouth Parks Department.

He now holds the Kew diploma in horticulture which qualifies him to undertake work at a post-graduate level.

With him on the picket line tomorrow will be Jane Allen of the Palm House who is an expert in cacti, extremely primitive plants which existed at the time of the dinosaurs.

Also present will be Dusha Hayes, who like Mr Kidd is an active member of the GMB and who nurtures Kew's unsurpassed collection of orchids.

It will be a highly unusual picket line tomorrow with little more than a mild ticking off for colleagues who ignore it.



Growing discontent: Chris Kidd, one of Kew's specialist gardeners striking over management's 0.9 per cent pay offer

Photograph: John Voos

Pig organs
cleared for
human
transplantTOM WILKIE
Science Editor

Surgeons and scientists should be allowed to transplant the hearts and kidneys of genetically engineered pigs into humans, but forbidden from using body parts from chimpanzees or baboons to save human lives, according to a panel of experts.

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics yesterday called on the Government to set up a national advisory committee on xenografting - animal to human organ transplants - to put controls and regulations in place before the first experiments are carried out on human patients.

Professor Albert Weale, of the University of Essex and chairman of the Nuffield Council's working party, said: "Xenotransplantation promises much - the shortage of donor organs can be overcome. Around 5,000 patients are on the waiting list for transplants but because of the shortage of donated human organs, less than 3,000 transplants were performed in 1995."

Because the benefits could be so considerable, Professor Weale said the working party had decided that "it would be ethically acceptable to develop the technique experimentally".

But he stressed it should proceed with caution. In September last year, a British company, Imutran, announced it had transplanted organs from genetically engineered pigs into monkeys and hoped to transplant pig hearts into humans within the next couple of years.

Despite the hype surrounding the experiments, their outcome is unclear. The working party stressed that the first transplants on humans would be

highly experimental and recommended that patients should seek independent advice. Only adults in terminal conditions should be considered initially.

By ruling out transplants from chimpanzees, baboons and other higher primates, the council delivered a discreet rebuff to developments in the US. In 1984, in the highly publicised case of "Baby Face", a young baby received a baboon heart, but survived only 20 days. In 1992 and 1993, American surgeons tried again by transplanting baboon livers into two patients - neither survived longer than 70 days.

The Nuffield Council argued that although higher primates made technically suitable donors, their close genetic relationship with humans made it morally unacceptable to use them for that end. The working party also said that primates breed too slowly to be a ready source of organs.

Worse however was the possibility that primates might harbour viruses or other diseases which could prove both virulent and infectious in humans.

Pigs are more suitable because they are prolific breeders, not an endangered species, and because we already use them in ways that we do not use chimpanzees - such as eating them. "If eating animals is allowed for the pleasures of the palate," Professor Weale said, "it would appear logical to allow their use for transplantation."

Pigs organs are so "foreign" that they provoke rejection by the human immune system. The animals must therefore have human genes implanted in them to "humanise" their organs.

Scientists welcome
move to clone sheepCHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

Sheep could in future be even harder to tell apart, following the announcement by British researchers that they have managed to clone sheep - a technique which could revolutionise livestock breeding.

The researchers from the Roslin Institute at Edinburgh said their breakthrough could be used to create identical animals, and to produce genetically manipulated meat and milk on factory farms.

But their work was attacked yesterday by the pressure group Compassion in World Farming, which warned that it could generate unexpected problems.

"We don't think it's good news for farmers, because it could reduce biodiversity," said Tim O'Brien, the group's research director. "Cloning that results in identical animals could mean that if one gets infected with a deadly disease, all the others will - it could eliminate the whole flock."

Ian Wilmut, an embryologist at the Roslin Institute, said the technique - the clones were produced by removing cells from a sheep embryo and growing them - could be used to produce uniform animals for meat production. "It's to the advantage of the farmer to have a uniform group of animals. They reach slaughter age at the same time, and it's to the advantage of the slaughterer to have animals of a uniform type," he said.

Davor Solter, of the Max Planck Institute for Immunobiology in Freiburg, Germany, called the work, reported today in the science journal *Nature*, "a cause for celebration."

"Aside from its intrinsic biological interest, this achievement opens up the possibility of manipulating the sheep's genes before cloning them," he wrote in a commentary.

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Captain Bob scents the end of his odyssey

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

For Bob Dole, that Captain Ahab among modern-day Republicans, the obsessive quest of almost two decades is nearly over. In politics, of course, nothing is ever absolutely certain. But, barring calamity, his party's presidential nomination, the great white whale of his ambition, is his for the taking.

In a life studded with bitter failures – few more bitter than his failed races for the White House in 1980 and 1988 – and in which nothing has come easily, Tuesday evening was surely one of the sweetest moments. Damned as a Washington insider, decided for his feeble campaigning and half-written-off by the chattering classes only 10 days before, Mr Dole was a winner, and how.

The results were devastating: a primary sweep, an eight-for-eight night in baseball parlance, in which Mr Dole never dropped below 40 per cent and Pat Buchanan, his closest rival, not once exceeded 29 per cent. Mostly the margins were far wider: 55 to 20 over the publisher Steve Forbes in Connecticut, 53 to 21 over Mr Buchanan in Maryland and 67 to 20 per cent over Lamar Alexander in Rhode Island.

In presidential races, these are knockout blows. At this point only a monumental blunder or (less improbable) an incident raising grave doubts about his age or health, can deprive him of the prize, and Mr Dole's every opponent knows it. Even Mr Buchanan, rightly assailing the Senate majority leader for running a campaign that was "clueless, just an endless series of clichés," acknowledges his victory "seems inevitable".

Even before the New England polls had closed on Tuesday, Senator Dick Lugar, who never made it out of single figures, bowed to the inevitable. Two hours later, well before complete results were available, Mr Alexander called it quits, returning from Florida to Nashville, in his native Tennessee, to make it official.

And by mid-morning yesterday it seemed Mr Forbes could be joining them. Cancelling his stump schedule in upstate New York, the publishing magnate, who has lavished \$25m (£16.6m) of his own money on his campaign, convened an afternoon press conference to

THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS '96

make "an important announcement". Aides would not confirm he was leaving the race; others said it would be a joint appearance with Jack Kemp, the popular New York Republican who shares Mr Forbes's passion for a flat tax. But, whatever the decision, further pursuit of the nomination looks futile. After his rout on the supposedly friendly turf of wealthy Connecticut, Mr Forbes had New York's primary today as his last realistic chance to reverse the tide. But a new poll shows Mr Dole had widened his lead in the Empire State, with 48 per cent to 18 per cent for his closest rival. And this pattern will surely continue. Shorn of their candidate of choice, Lugar and Alexander supporters, cut from the same



Buchanan: Fading, but he still cannot be ignored

moderate cloth as Dole voters, will switch their allegiance to today's overwhelming favourite.

With the contest proper all but over, it is another question which torments Republicans: how will Mr Buchanan handle his defeat? In interviews yesterday he seemed to rule out an independent candidacy, which would split the party, and hinted that for an acceptable price (platform concessions perhaps, or a keynote speaking slot at the San Diego convention) he would swing behind Mr Dole.

"I'm not going to do anything to help Bill Clinton get re-elected," the chastened but unbowed outsider said. But the "cause" will continue. "We do have a peasant army, we live off the land and we're going all the way." Thus 1996 has become a

curious replica of 1992. Then it was Mr Buchanan against the establishment candidate (and sitting President) George Bush. Today, Bob Dole is the establishment's man. Just as four years ago, Mr Buchanan's conservative populism attracts everywhere 25 to 30 per cent – but no more.

And the Republican nightmare is of another all-too-possible parallel with 1992: a harsh and divisive Buchanan speech in San Diego that only cements the party's image of intolerance and division, making it easy prey for Mr Clinton in the autumn. But Mr Buchanan cannot be ignored. Not only are the fear and resentment he voices, over disappearing jobs and corporate greed, shared by tens of millions of voters; he also represents a magnet for the 20 per cent of the electorate which went for Ross Perot in 1992, sealing Mr Bush's fate in the process.

For the moment, however, the Dole juggernaut rolls on. With Tuesday's sweep he has raised his delegate total to 276, far ahead of Mr Forbes's 69 and the 51 pledged to Mr Buchanan, and over a quarter of the 996 needed to win. More will come in New York, which sends 102 delegates to San Diego, and on "Super Tuesday" next week, when 362 are at stake.

As if his triumph was not overpowering enough already, Mr Dole yesterday tightened his grip on the two "mega-states" which vote on 12 March by securing the endorsements of George Bush Jr, the popular Governor of Texas, and his brother Jeb, leader of the Republicans in Florida. Their father too was expected to back Mr Dole. After 1992, if there is one man a Bush cannot abide, it is Pat Buchanan.

At his victory party, yesterday's failing Republican candidate had already become Dole the nominee, with Bill Clinton, not Pat Buchanan, in his sights. Unity was his watchword. "We've proved the Republican party is not splitting apart, we've found a leader to bring the party together, I will be proud to carry that banner." But now is also time to shed Ahab's mantle. True, the Captain caught up with Moby Dick, only for the harpooned whale to smash his boat, dragging Ahab down to disaster with him. Such, Republicans pray, will not be the fate of Captain Dole and the White House? It is here Bill Clinton admitted smoking pot but not inhaling.



Winning ways: Mr Dole with his wife, Elizabeth, celebrating after he took a commanding lead in Tuesday's Republican primaries. Photograph: AP

Party machine bags NY for Dole

DAVID USBORNE
New York

The pundits are calling it the "drive-by primary" because there has been so little time for actual campaigning. Drive-by shooting might be more apt. When voters in New York go to the polls today to vote in the Republican nomination race, the rat-a-tat of verbal gunfire will be in their ears.

No one would expect it to be any different; politics in the Empire State have never been genteel. Remember four years ago, when the Democrats were agonising over their candidate for the White House? It is here Bill Clinton admitted smoking pot but not inhaling.

Taking most of the bullets this time, oddly, has been a man who is not even running for president. But the respected Alvin D'Amato, the senior senator from New York and self-declared leader of the state's Republican Party, has been accused of Soviet-style machinations designed to guarantee Bob Dole wins in the state, come what may.

Mr D'Amato's first trick was to defend patently undemocratic party rules that made it almost impossible for anyone other than Mr Dole to make it to the ballot. That tactic was ruled out of order by the courts last week, giving just enough time for Steve Forbes to qualify in all 31 of New York's

electoral districts and Pat Buchanan in only 23.

But Mr D'Amato still has the cards and so too, therefore, does Mr Dole. When they enter the polling booths today, voters in New York will not be voting directly for the candidates but for the delegates each wants to send to the Republican convention. The delegates for Mr Dole are almost all high-profile and often popular names in their local districts. Messrs Forbes and Buchanan have had to scrape together delegates who are mostly unknown.

"It is like an Eastern European election in the 1950s," thundered Mr Buchanan in a campaign appearance in Buffalo, in the north of the state. (Because of his less than overwhelming appeal to ethnic voters, Mr Buchanan has not come within 300 miles of New York City).

Mr Buchanan, meanwhile, has opened a second front against the Republican Mayor of New York City, Rudolph Giuliani, who has taken a blunt anyone-but-Buchanan position. "Mayor Giuliani has had personal problems with me ever since I wrote columns severely critical of him," Mr Buchanan said.

Mr D'Amato, whose other full-time job is keeping the Whitewater affair alive as chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, has made sure that whenever Mr Dole has ap-

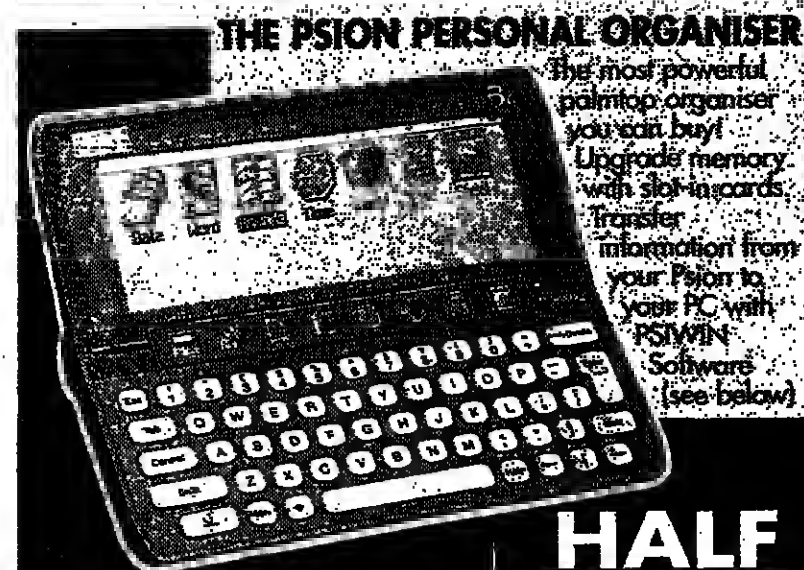
peared in the state he has been flanked by the might of the party, notably by Mr D'Amato himself and Governor George Pataki. A rally for Mr Dole in Franklin Square, Long Island, two nights ago, was a show-case for the party machine, gently purring.

"Isn't he dynamic, ladies and gentlemen," declared Joseph Mondello, the chairman of the Nassau County Republicans, introducing the candidate. Honest answer: No. Party answer: Yes, sir-ree.

And the machine is about to deliver. Yesterday both *Daily News* and the *New York Post* joined in endorsing Mr Dole and the eve-of-voting polls all put the senator ahead of his foes.

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international

Middle East crisis: Military cracks down hard in bid to snuff out local support for Hamas and its suicide bombers

Israel puts ring of steel around the Palestinians

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

Israel has imposed a curfew on the 800,000 Palestinians who live in the 465 villages of the West Bank, tighter than anything seen since the Gulf war. "No one goes in and no one goes out," said Major-General Ilan Biran, the Israeli military commander for the area, adding that all males would be arrested "without mercy, in any village and town where we suspect there are terrorists".

The Israeli army has also sealed off Jericho, Gaza and the six Palestinian cities on the West Bank which came under the authority of Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, in December. Traffic is banned, supplies of food and gas are cut and children cannot get to school.

Maj-Gen Biran said: "Every potential suicide bomber and his family must know that his house will be destroyed and their communities will be punished." Mass deportation of Hamas members and their sympathisers is being considered, an Israeli tactic in the past. Abu Dis College, considered a Hamas bastion, near Jerusalem, has been closed by troops.

Israel aims to pressure the Palestinians sufficiently to create a backlash against Hamas. Its forces are closing Islamic institutions alleged to have links with Hamas, from which came the suicide bombers who have killed 37 Israelis in two weeks. Israel is also to destroy the houses of people associated with the bombers. Shimon Shrit, the Minister of Religious Affairs, has recommended bulldozing their villages.

Benjamin Ben Eliezer, Minister of Housing, said yesterday: "We intend to hit all the leaders of Hamas." If this means assassinations, like that of Yahya Ayyash, the Hamas master bomb-maker, in January,

Hamas is likely to hit back with more suicide attacks.

Israeli actions and the deployment of troops in the West Bank and Jerusalem have paralysed Palestinian economic activity. Some 60,000 Palestinians who work in Israel have to stay at home. Hotels in Palestinian districts of east Jerusalem were yesterday handing out notices saying that they could only serve buffet lunches because their workers from the West Bank could not enter the city.

As well as trying to force Palestinians to reject Hamas, Israel aims to put pressure on Mr Arafat to arrest Hamas leaders where he is in control. Israeli leaders have threatened that if he does not eliminate the infrastructure of Hamas they will do it for him. His security forces have now arrested some 400 Hamas members and yesterday raided the Islamic University in Gaza, long a Hamas stronghold. A Palestinian court yesterday gave a life sentence to a man who confessed to recruiting three suicide bombers.

Meanwhile, an Israeli Arab truck driver has been accused of smuggling into Israel from Gaza the suicide bomber who killed 13 people in Tel Aviv on Monday. Israeli radio said an Islamic militant group paid him \$1,100 (£730) to take the bomber past border guards by hiding him in a bag. He dropped him off at Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Centre shopping mall one minute before the explosion occurred. The driver was arrested shortly after the attack. "He is in his forties and has a family. I cannot believe it," a resident of his village in northern Israel said. "He travels to Gaza daily. He brings scrap metal from there." Israel has some 900,000 Arab citizens.

The Israelis are soon to start installing the first consignments of bomb-detecting equipment donated by the US.



Frisky business: An Israeli policeman searches a Palestinian outside Shuafat refugee camp yesterday

Photograph: David Silverman / Reuters

Hizbollah scatters to escape revenge strikes

ROBERT FISK
Beirut

"Will they bomb Dahi?" my bank manager asked yesterday, as if it was only the target that the Israelis had yet to choose. Dahi is that area of the southern suburbs where the Hizbollah maintain their Beirut headquarters; but the pro-Iranian guerrilla army has already decided where Israel's retaliation for the Hamas suicide bombings might fall. All across southern and eastern Lebanon, their leaders have left their homes, closed the Hizbollah's offices, clinics and pharmacies and ordered their men to be ready for a sustained air attack.

In Baalbek, too, the Hizbollah moved to "safe" houses on the instructions of their Beirut leadership as Israeli jets continued to fly reconnaissance missions over Lebanon. Rafiq Hariri, the Lebanese

Prime Minister has asked Richard Jones, the new American ambassador to Beirut, if Lebanon is again to be made to pay the price for other people's conflicts. Mr Jones said he "didn't know" if the bombings in Israel would have repercussions in Lebanon. In the past, such remarks by US diplomats have usually preceded air raids.

The Hizbollah have been quite prepared to court Israel's revenge. They have now described their Monday night attack on Israeli occupation troops in Lebanon - which left a colonel and three other Israeli soldiers dead - as "a tribute to the martyrs who staged the suicide bombing attacks against the enemy". The slaughter in Israel, they said, was part of a "heroic holy war". The Hamas spokesman in Beirut, Moustafa al-Liddawi, held a press conference in the city in which he described the quad-

ruple bombings and the death of at least 60 people as "legitimate and heroic operations in line with Hamas policy".

Hamas has nothing to do with Lebanon - and nothing to offer the 400,000 Palestinian refugees here whose demand to return to their homes in what is now Israel has never been addressed by the Islamic Palestinian movement. But the press conference could be regarded as another provocation. Israel cannot target Islamists in Jordan - with whom it is now at peace - and can scarcely bomb Syria since it would bring an immediate end to any chance of an Israeli-Syrian peace accord. Which leaves only Lebanon, a country as small as Israel but one whose ability to defend itself is in inverse proportion to Israel's ability to attack it.

The Lebanese government's distress has been increased by a statement from the Israeli

Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, that he has given the Israeli intelligence services permission to deport up to 100 Hamas members from Israel and the occupied territories. If this threat is followed up, the deportees can be sent only into Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Egypt, which is at cold peace with Israel, can no longer be used as dustbins for Palestinians whom Israel wants to be rid of.

Some Lebanese were speculating yesterday that Israel may even target Iran, which is now being blamed by Israel and the United States for inspiring the Hamas suicide bombings. Iran's Martyrs' Foundation staged a memorial service in January at Tehran's Ark Mosque for Yahya Ayyash, the Hamas bomber whose assassination by Israeli agents set off the latest bombings. It is also true that on a visit to Damascus last week, the Iranian vice-president, Has-

san Habibi, met Imad Alami, a Hamas politburo member in Syria, and Ramadan Abdullah Chalal, the head of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement.

But Mr Habibi, who visited Syria for talks with government ministers, also met officials of the Lebanese Amal movement whose head is the speaker of the Lebanese parliament. However unlikely, no one in Lebanon doubts that Israel would use such contacts to make the case that the suicide bombers acted on the instructions of Iranian mentors.

"No Hamas people are going to be trained to be suicide bombers in Iran," a Palestinian official in Beirut said last night. "You don't need to send someone to Iran to learn how to commit suicide. You just have to grow up under Israeli occupation in the fifth of the camps in Gaza and the West Bank to understand how to kill yourself."

Kuwaiti in court for converting to Jesus

ANDREW BROWN
Religious Affairs Correspondent

Carrying a copy of the Bible, and wearing a cross around his neck, 45-year-old Qambar Ali yesterday appeared in a Kuwaiti court, charged with converting from Islam to Christianity.

If convicted, Mr Ali faces loss of some civil rights, chief among them the expectation that if he is killed, his murderers will be punished. Under Islamic law, if a sane Muslim renounces his religion and refuses to repent, there is no penalty for another Muslim who kills him, on ground of his apostasy.

If found guilty, Mr Ali will lose the rights of inheritance, the right to be married to a Muslim, and custody of his children. The prosecution against him has been brought privately. Mohammed al-Jadai, one of three lawyers prosecuting him, told the court: "We will not permit him to harm the feelings of Muslims."

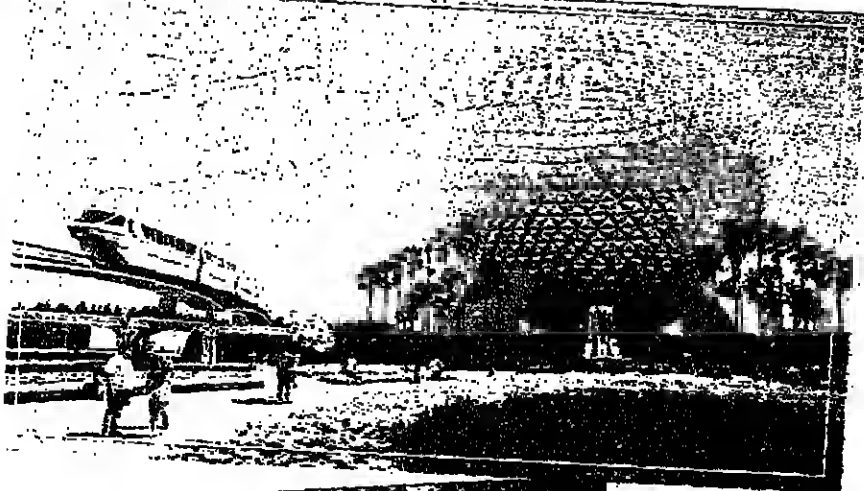
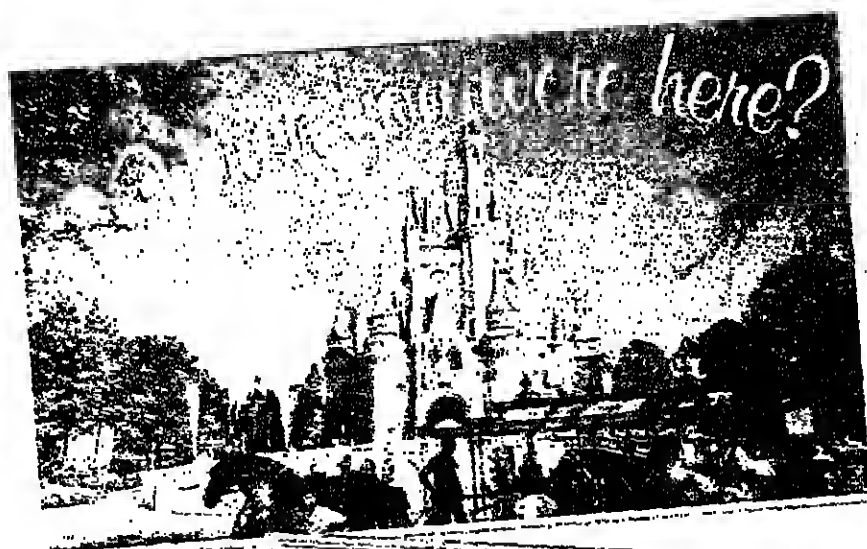
"He provoked the feelings of Muslims, telling the newspapers about his conversion, and distorting Islam's image," said Mr al-Jadai. He said that if the court wanted a precedent, it could study a Cairo court's decision last year to end the happy marriage of an Egyptian professor, Nasr Abu Zaid, on the grounds of apostasy, although he denied them.

Mr Ali confirmed to the Kuwaiti court yesterday he was now a Christian, but told the panel it had no jurisdiction in the case. He asked the court to send the case to the constitutional court on the grounds that Kuwait's constitution guarantees freedom of belief.

The conversion contributed to the break-up of Mr Ali's marriage last year. He says he changes accommodation often as a security measure, cannot work and has not seen his children for five months because of family opposition.

Mr Ali said he had told newspapers of his conversion to publicise what he called his ex-wife's illegal refusal to allow him to visit his six-year-old daughter and four-year-old son.

The judges will rule on 17 April whether they are competent to hear further sessions of the case.

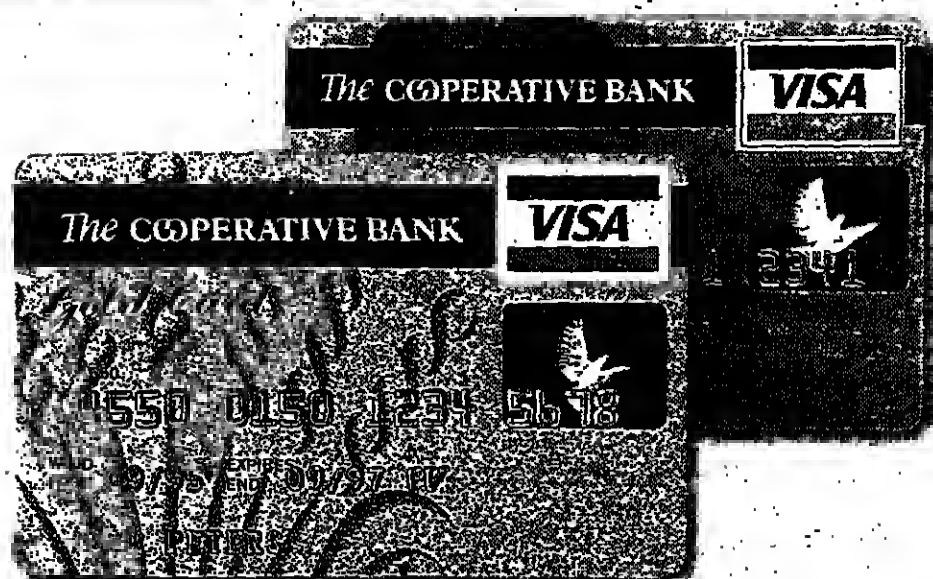


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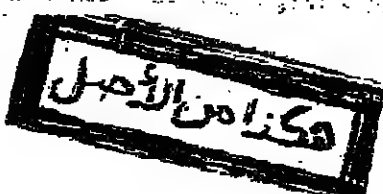
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Croat police try to seize suburb in Sarajevo

EMMA RAY
Sarajevo

In an audacious but futile attempt to expand Croat authority in Bosnia's fractious Muslim-Croat Federation, 22 Bosnian Croat policemen yesterday tried to take control of Hadzici, the third Serb-held suburb of Sarajevo reverting to government rule under the Dayton peace plan.

The Croats, who claimed to be acting on the orders of the deputy interior minister, were ordered only by the UN police chief, backed by a threat of force, and departed an hour before the scheduled arrival of a multi-ethnic federal police unit.

Yesterday morning the first of 7 federal police officers — 51 Muslims, 5 Croats and 15 Serbs, reflecting the area's pre-war mix — arrived to take over Hadzici, a wartime Serb population reduced from around 10,000 to a few hundred.

Several dozen Muslim civilians streamed across the former front line to check on the coalition of the homes that they had to leave in 1992.

"I last saw her breathe life," Danica Matic, a woman who had stayed in Hadzici throughout the war, said tearfully as Avdo Hebib, the interior minister, re-opened the police station. There was a loud explosion, as a door in the building had been booby-trapped, but no one was hurt.

M Matic's elderly friend, Vukijica Milinovic, a Croat who had also stayed in Hadzici, seemed not to notice the bang she was hugging an old man. This is Muhamed, she cried as the two wept and exchanged greetings. "He's my neighbour. I haven't seen him since the war began."

"For years," he said, wiping his eye. Mr Hebib was mobbed by reporters asking about the Croat incursion, about which he knew nothing. "I heard there were some police here without any approval," he said. "I haven't been in touch with my deputy, so I don't know [if he issued orders to the Croat police]. But everything's going well."

Commissioner Peter Fitzgerald, head of the UN International Police Task Force, which monitors the local force, greeted Mr Hebib. "We had a few problems before you arrived," he said. The Croat police presence had caused tension with French troops from Nato's peace force (I-For), although eventually the Croat inspector had withdrawn his men.

"When I got here at about six, there were a few of them patrolling the streets," Commissioner Fitzgerald said. "I told them to leave immediately, because they were in violation of the Dayton accord. I told them to leave peacefully but said that if they did not, I was prepared to call I-For and use force if necessary."

Few of Hadzici's Serbs remained. A few yards from the smouldering ruins of the town hall, torched on Tuesday night by departing Serbs, a man and an old woman waited with a few possessions for a lift to Serb-held territory. "I spent four years in a concentration camp [a government prison, in Bratunac, 15km away] and I don't think things have changed much since then," the man said bitterly.

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Glad to be home: Muslims in Hadzici waving a Bosnian flag celebrate the handover of the Sarajevo suburb to the Muslim-led government. Photograph: Michel Euler/AP

Catalans haggle hard in Spanish coalition talks

ELIZABETH NASH
Madrid

The prospects of the Spanish conservative leader Jose Maria Aznar forming a stable government remain in doubt, despite his insistence that he could reach agreement with Catalan and Basque nationalists.

In bitter contrast to his hopes of ruling with a "new majority", Mr Aznar is being subjected to the pressures of Spain's most accomplished political haggler, the Catalan Nationalist Convergence and Union party (CiU). The Popular Party, whose victory in Sunday's elections left it 20 seats short of an absolute majority, is to open talks with the CiU today that could last weeks.

The CiU, led by the astute Jordi Pujol, is making Mr Aznar sweat, partly because of its strong bargaining position and because many Catalan nationalists yesterday jammed the party's telephone switchboards to oppose the idea that their 16 MPs might back a party they

believe has long treated them with hostility and contempt.

As the price for their support, the Catalans are expected to demand a higher share of taxes levied by Madrid, and control of all taxes raised in Catalonia.

In addition, the CiU's parliamentary spokesman in Madrid, Joaquim Molins, would like the PP to recognise the Catalan people as a nation deserving more favourable treatment than other regions in Spain.

Mr Aznar said yesterday he was ready to discuss these matters. But the recognition of Catalan nationhood lies in the face of a deeply held PP conviction, an unexpunged trace of its Francoist origins, that Spain is a single nation and a single state.

If taken on board by the PP's spokesman Rodrigo Rato, who is handling today's talks, the principle could be unpalatable to those on the party's right and create strong internal tensions.

Mr Pujol, prime minister of the region that attracts most of Spain's foreign investment, tried to calm the nervous busi-

ness community yesterday by saying that Spain's existing budget needed only minor tweaking to keep the country on course for membership of European monetary union.

The conservative Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), with five MPs, said yesterday it wanted guarantees that its autonomy would be respected, plus a favourable policy on industrialisation in the region and co-operation on "methods of pacification". But in dealing with ETA Basque separatists, the PNV does not rule out eventual talks with ETA, while the PP prefers firmer policing.

Mr Aznar yesterday won the support of four MPs from the conservative Canary Islands Coalition (CC) — a helping hand, but useless without the Catalans. None of the players wants new elections, not even the Socialists who would very likely improve their vote. But if no deal can be cut, or ad hoc accords fail to establish stability, new elections this year remain on the cards.

IN BRIEF

US names Cold War spy suspects

Washington — Scores of Americans who helped betray United States secrets to Moscow, including information on the development of the atomic bomb in 1945, were named by the National Security Agency (NSA). It made public intercepts of decoded Soviet messages with the names of Soviet agents, including Lauchlin Currie, an aide to President Franklin Roosevelt, and physicist Theodore Hall, who is now living in England. One of the messages from a Soviet spy boss in Washington also referred to an agent named "Alec" who the NSA said was "probably Alger Hiss", the former State Department official accused by then Congressman Richard Nixon of being a spy. The NSA revealed last year that he US had broken the Soviet Code in a project named Venona half a century after its start.

Deng 'full of zest' for Party Congress

Beijing — Deng Xiaoping (right), China's paramount leader, is in fine fettle, according to his daughter, writes *Press Photo*. The government's China News Service reports Deng Rong as saying her 5-year-old father was in "very good health", sleeps well, and watches the television news every evening. "His spirits are especially good," Ms Deng said. She to China Central Television her father had watched the live coverage of Tuesday's two-hour opening session of the National People's Congress, an experience which many of the delegates found sleep-inducing. Mr Deng was not only awake, but was "full of zest," his daughter said.

Mandela in 'excellent' health

Johannesburg — Nelson Mandela has been examined and is in excellent health, his doctors said from the clinic where the South African president is undergoing medical checks. The full results will be released tomorrow. Mr Mandela said he was undergoing the tests to prove he was in good shape for a man of 77. *Reuters*

Cuba shot down planes to 'defend dignity'

United Nations — Cuba told the United Nations General Assembly that it shot down two US-owned planes because repeated violations of its airspace left it no choice but to defend "our dignity and sovereignty". Presenting his nation's case, the Cuban Foreign Minister, Roberto Robaina, blamed the White House for failing to prevent Cuban-exile groups from flying illegally over Cuba despite repeated diplomatic protests. *AP*

Colombian drug baron shot dead

Bogota — One of the world's richest drug traffickers was shot dead by Colombian police two months after he escaped from a maximum-security jail. Authorities were elated at the death of a man known as Jose Santacruz Londoño, 54, considered number three in the Cali drug cartel. His vehicle was intercepted by police in the north-western city of Medellin, once home to a rival drug gang. *AP*

Panic in Taiwan over China's missile test

Taipei — Uncertainty over China's planned missile tests led people to dump the local currency, buy gold and clamour to flee islands near their menacing neighbour. An airline ticketing officer on the offshore island of Matsu said passengers were hurrying on the offshore island of Matsu said passengers were hurrying to evacuate to Taiwan before China begins its missile tests from tomorrow for one week. *Reuters*

Jail for sex con-man

Melbourne — An Australian who posed as a secret agent for five years in order to have sex with a former girlfriend was jailed for nine months yesterday. The 29-year-old man manipulated an innocent, patriotic young woman to have sex by invoking five fictional operatives to give her orders, which included oral sex to cure a fictional terminal illness, a court was told. *Reuters*



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leads down: Russian soldiers take cover behind their tank yesterday as a shell lands in the rubble of Grozny

Chechen rebels try to reclaim Grozny

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

Chechen rebels yesterday launched a ferocious attempt to wrest back their wrecked capital city, on the eve of a Russian Security Council meeting to agree a strategy to end the war before it further damages President Boris Yeltsin's re-election prospects.

Reports from Chechnya suggested the fighting was the worst since Russian troops seized Grozny more than a year ago. Last night the Chechens took control of a power plant, according to Interfax news agency.

Earlier, Russian tanks rumbled into the city centre after an attempt to storm it was made by the rebels, who reportedly also occupied – then lost – a police post, and attacked at least 10 Russian checkpoints, using machine-guns and rocket propelled grenades.

The flare-up came as a welcome reminder to the Russian Security Council of the enormity of its task, as it prepared to gather in the Kremlin later today to try to decide a strategy for ending the conflict. Mr Yeltsin has pledged to settle the war before the presidential elections in June, where he is facing a strong challenge from the Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov.

Before the council will be reports compiled by two commissions, convened by the President to explore ways of solving the crisis. But few analysts hold out much hope for their success. Their chairman – the Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and a presidential adviser Emil

But, rather, this flurry of official activity mainly represents an attempt by the Kremlin to widen

the circle of blame for Chechnya beyond the presidential suite for a highly unpopular war which has claimed at least 30,000 lives. The latest victims comprise an estimated 10,000 refugees who are now living in tents and makeshift shelters after fleeing fighting in the Chechen town of Sernovodsk.

Mr Yeltsin has sent out mixed messages on Chechnya – a characteristic of his government's chaotic policy in the conflict. But he appears to believe that it can be wound down by carefully targeted attacks on the rebels, while striking local agreements with peaceable areas backed by promises of investment and a power-sharing deal.

Yet the rebels – who are well versed in the art of inflicting embarrassment on the Kremlin – seem likely to carry on resisting. Nor is it clear that the Russian military, which is populated by hardliners, is under the control of the Yeltsin administration, no matter what its policy.

The President can, however, go into today's meeting armed with what he will see as one piece of good news. Reports said that the rebel leadership, led by Salmar Raduyev, the 28-year-old in charge of the raid which led to a mass-hostage taking in Kizlyar, Dagestan, and the Russian bombardment of Pervomayskoye in January.

He died in hospital from head injuries, less than two months after fighting his way through the Russian lines at Pervomayskoye with more than 50 hostages. As

he was considered a possible candidate to the Chechen rebel commander, Dzhokhar Dudayev, his friend the Russians will regard his death as a triumph.

This view may not be shared by some of the Chechen rebels. Raduyev had been engaged in a power struggle with Dzhokhar Dudayev, the Chechen leader who led the rebel force which seized hundreds of hostages in southern Russia town of Gudermes last June. Raduyev had also incurred wrath within Chechen ranks for taking pregnant women hostages in a maternity home during the Kizlyar operation – an act regarded as shameful by the more devout Muslims among the Chechens.

Yesterday the Russian authorities were busy spreading stories that Raduyev had been shot dead by his fellow Chechens after a fight over \$1.5m (£1m) apparently a payment for the Kizlyar raid (which had meant to be an attack on an airfield). As the circumstances of his death were still foggy, the Russians were taking the opportunity to present the Chechens as split and squabbling terrorists but, for once, their version looked vaguely plausible.

Russia's post-Cold War role is to counterbalance the growing influence of the West, the Russian Foreign Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, said yesterday, AP reports. Russia is gone "too far" in befriending the West after the 1991 Soviet collapse, he told the daily newspaper Izvestia.

Vichy survivor denies sending Jews to death

MARY DEJEVSKY
Paris

A court hearing opened in Bordeaux yesterday on a potentially sensitive issue, the fate of Maurice Papon, the last representative of the Vichy regime still under investigation in France. Mr Papon, 85, was the administrative head of the Gironde region in south-west France between 1942 and 1944, and head of the department of Jewish affairs. He is accused of knowingly sending almost 1,700 Jews to their death at Auschwitz.

The hearing, which is being held behind closed doors, is to decide whether there is sufficient evidence to put Mr Papon on trial for war crimes. It is expected to last three days. The case is regarded in France as a touchstone of official attitudes to Vichy.

The investigation into Mr Papon began 15 years ago and its protracted nature aroused suspicions that it was being deliberately stalled by the late president François Mitterrand.

Mr Mitterrand's own links with the Vichy regime as a young politician were revealed five years ago, and he faced repeated criticism during his 14-year presidency for his seeming reluctance to pursue French war criminals.

One of Jacques Chirac's acts as president was to adopt a harsher attitude to Vichy. Giving a speech on the anniversary last year of the 1942 Vel'd'Hiv roundup of Jews in Paris, he aroused controversy by acknowledging the responsibility of France and the French state for the deportations of Jews.

This week's hearing, which began with a two-hour delay of the investigation, is being attended by 14 lawyers on behalf of the state prosecutor and Mr Papon's two defending lawyers. In an interview with *Libération* yesterday, Mr Papon emphasised that he would appeal against any decision to put him on trial.

He denied responsibility for war crimes and said he was being made "the scapegoat in a political conspiracy". Of his role in the deportation convoys, he said he was proud of having had the German guards replaced by French guards and on one occasion managing to have the usual cattle trucks replaced by passenger carriages.

He rejected the charge that he knew he was sending the Jews to their death at Auschwitz, saying: "There was knowledge of Drancy [the French holding camp for deportees near Paris], but not of Auschwitz."

Antarctic staff lose their cold comforts

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Correspondent

The long Antarctic nights will this year feel a little bit longer to 275 American and New Zealand staff based near the South Pole, following a budget decision made in Washington.

They will have to forgo fresh food and letters which would normally have been provided by a supply plane in mid-June. A budget cut by the US Air Force, which provided 75 per cent of the funding for delivering goods and people to the outposts, means the first supply of winter will not come until August – five months into the almost endless nights.

The team of 262 American and 13 New Zealand staff will have enough concentrated food and heating oil to last the wait, but the cancellation is expected to have psychological effects.

"While [the plane is] not critical to their survival, it provides a very important morale boost in the middle of the Antarctic night," said Dave Lippman, spokesman for the US Naval Antarctic Support Unit. The team always looks forward to supplies, which bring fresh food, letters, photographs, presents and videotapes to the extreme isolation of the tour.

The flight takes off from Christchurch, New Zealand, and drops loads at the US stations at the South Pole and McMurdo, and the New Zealand Scott base near McMurdo.

Instead the scientists, who have made key observations relating to the ozone layer and have continuing studies of the biology, atmosphere and history of the Antarctic "desert" will rely on telephones, faxes and the Internet to keep in touch.

The New Zealand Antarctic survey put the cost of flight support at around \$1m (£52,000) in 1994-95, making up 10 per cent of its budget. But the US air force put up three-quarters of the cost, spending which has now been cut back.

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The Bachelor Boy

He doesn't like sex and for 30 years didn't eat lunch, but women have queued for days to see him as Heathcliff.

Paul Vallely examines Cliff Richard's enduring appeal

It was Minnie Caldwell who started it. For those under 40 it had best be explained that Minnie Caldwell was one of a trio of Coronation Street trapeze artists who occupied the snug of the Rovers Return, lingering all evening over a milk stout and musing beguilingly on the events of the day.

One evening in 1961 she made passing reference to the teenage idol of the moment, "that chubby Cliff Richard". The remark stung. The 12-and-a-half stone 21-year-old pop singer decided to go on a diet and get fit. The path was set for doing without lunch for 33 years (he has started to eat at midday again recently) and the daily tennis which have promoted the look of eternal youth as well as a deal of sneering (he once made the mistake of admitting that he preferred tennis to sex).

The conversion to lunching is not, apparently, a sign of weakening with the years. Cliff has never done that. It is due to his decision to put on a stone (from 11 to 12) for the eponymous lead role in *Heathcliff*, a musical version of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, which this week set a UK theatre record for advance sales when £2.5m worth of tickets sold on first day of booking.

The surprising thing is that anyone should be surprised by the success. Sir Cliff Richard is without doubt, as one pop pundit had it, "the most successful British chart act of all time". He has sold 45 million singles over a 30-year period and is the only

Cliff is the man most women want as their fantasy holiday partner, according to a recent survey

UK artist to have had hits – more than 100 of them – in every decade from the Fifties to the Nineties. Yet those who are not fans continue to puzzle over his enduring attraction.

The standard response is a faint derision. Those who camped out for days for tickets on the fourth floor of a car park at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham were described as "ladies of a certain age" (45 to 65).

Recent reports that Cliff is the man most women would want as their partner on a fantasy holiday (Mel Gibson was second) are qualified by the fact that the survey was conducted by *Hesapsons*. Newspaper profiles often carry the jibe that he is the same age as the rail union leader Jimmy Knapp. Urban myths about his Mary Poppins of the pop world include the malicious, and wholly erroneous, suggestion that he is the bearer of a colostomy bag. What is the cause of this sniggering and leering?

It might be his middle-of-the-road musical style. It might be his relentlessly Man at C&A fashion sense, which has always changed with the times but never departed from that basic template, albeit always choosing clothes designed for a man younger than his years; he is 56.

It might be his unashamed avowal of the very direct evangelical style of Christianity. When the Beatles were sitting at the feet of the Maharishi Mahesh. Yogi in

India, Cliff (who was actually born in Lucknow, spent the first eight years of his life in colonial India and endured racist taunts for his sunburnt skin when he arrived at school in England) was being called up to the stage at Earls Court by the US evangelist Billy Graham.

It might even be his personal asceticism: in an era of material affluence Cliff revels in personal frugality – despite reportedly being worth £25m he delights in under-spending on the meagre pocket money he awards himself and gives up considerable time to working for Third World, medical and children's charities.

In fact the core reason is none of these. Sex is at the heart of both his success and the sniggering. Go to his concerts and you will see that sex is what the public Cliff Richard sells, in a peculiarly antiseptic and choreographed form, to his middle-aged female fans. Yet sex is something in which the private man seems to have virtually no interest. The paradox is what intrigues.

The pop idol's primary duty has always been, as the writer Philip Norman once memorably said, to represent sin in its most enervating forms. Cliff Richard offers almost the opposite. No drugs, no foul language, no guitar-smashing or room-wrecking, no large-scale self-indulgence and no sex.

It was not always so. In 1958 his television debut was greeted by the *New Musical Express* with tirades against TV depravity and the corruption of the young. It condemned his "violent hip-swinging" and "crude exhibitionism" and pronounced that "Tommy Steele became Britain's teenage idol without resorting to this form of indecent, short-sighted vulgarity."

It was, of course, never that potent. The young Cliff was a soft, unthreatening version of Elvis with none of his US counterpart's white trash undercurrent. Where Elvis was powerful, Cliff was sweet. Yet his early records, such as "Move It", were among the best of the early British rock 'n' roll.

How has he lasted so long. Others have survived but only by making more dramatic transitions: Tommy Steele became the latter-day equivalent of a musical hall star; Adam Faith transmuted into a moderately successful character actor. Cliff, by contrast, kept up with the times, or rather just behind them.

In 1959 he and The Shadows found themselves in panto at the Globe Theatre, Stockton; in 1962 it was *The Billy Cotton Band Show*; in 1965 he composed *Sunday Night at the London Palladium*; in 1968 he made the first of two appearances singing for his country on the Eurovision Song Contest; in 1969 he starred on the *Sooty Show*; in the Seventies he became one of the first Western pop stars to appear behind the Iron Curtain; in 1980 he received the OBE, and in 1995 he took on the full status of Grade One listed pop star by singing with Vera Lynn at the VE Day anniversary celebrations.

How did he manage it? In the first (and best) of his movies, the satirical *Expresso Bongo* (*The Young Ones*, 1961, *Summer Holiday*, 1962 and *Wonderful Life*, 1964 all came later) he played an exploited young pop singer. Off screen, however, nothing could have been further from the truth – anyone less shrewd, determined or highly conscious of fashion could not have survived in the most competitive business in the world.

Nor is he a negligible musician. At a recent Greenbelt festival, the Christian equivalent of Glastonbury, he gave a solo performance of his big hits, accompanied only by his rather accomplished playing of his own guitar. Vocally he has a distinctively style of phrasing, so much so that even a professional cynic such as the pop writer Tony Parsons, listing Cliff's hits, concluded: "if you don't like at least some Cliff Richard, then you don't like pop music."

But in the end the key to his continued success is that slight frisson of safe sexuality. Cliff offers the expected quotient of on-stage pelvic thrusting but it is early sanitised and almost innocent. This ambiguity is at the heart of his persona. Cliff is the ever-available yet untouchable bachelor boy – never having suffered the setback of getting married he is at least still psychologically available to his fans. He is the fantasy lover who (apart from the waltzing of his neck) did not grow old as those that they married grew old.

Most of his relationships have been platonic, according to his biographer, Steve Turner. Cliff has only had three serious romances: he lost his virginity at 18 to Carol Harris, the wife of his Shadows bass player, Jet; when 22, he had a passionate affair with Una Stubbs, then 24, on the set of the film *Wonderful Life*; and in the early Eighties he enjoyed a three-year friendship with former Wimbledon ace Sue Barker. "It was a doomed relationship. We attracted more

He was a soft, unthreatening version of Elvis with none of the white trash undercurrents

attention than Charles and Di," Cliff complained when they split.

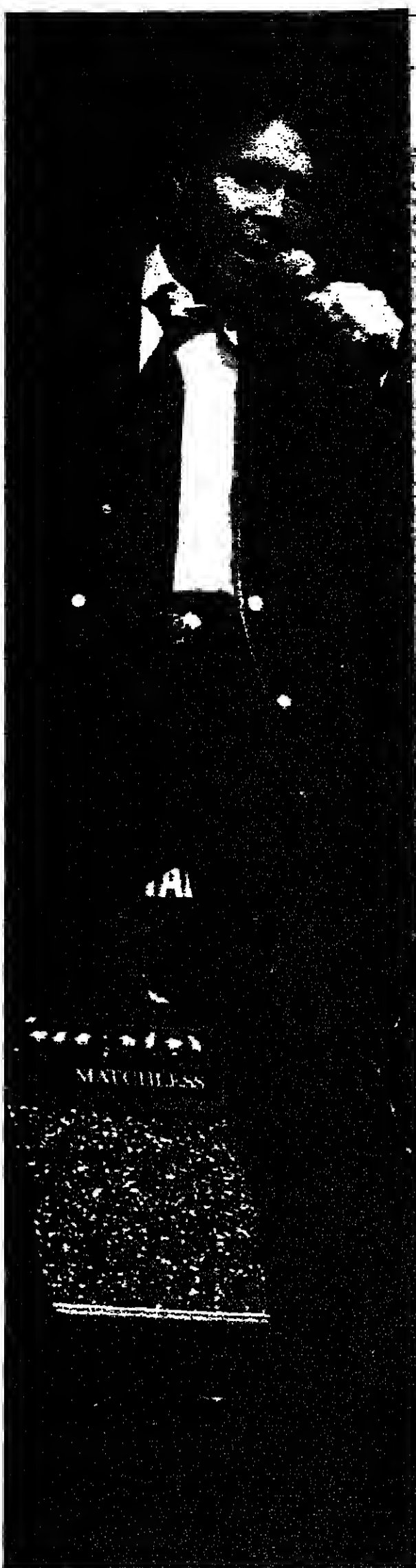
Repeatedly he has had to deny that he is homosexual – an allegation fed by the fact that he has lived for many years in Weybridge, Surrey, with his friend and manager Bill Latham, a former RE teacher. Bill, says Steve Turner, provides Cliff "with the emotional support most men get from marriage". But then Bill's girlfriend, Jill, lives there too.

All of which, in this second age, is deemed to be rather strange and said to reveal that the man has something to hide. But not for Cliff the androgynous zone of ambiguous sexuality occupied by post-modernists such as Michael Jackson and Madonna whose sexuality self-consciously wavers across some genderless no-person's-land. Cliff is happy to prefer tennis to sex in real life and then offer ersatz sex on stage.

He sees no contradiction. For his Heathcliff the Brute he is not only putting on weight, he is perfecting moody and unshaven designer stubble. Not very Cliff, one interviewer suggested to him. "It's called Acting," the great man responded archly.

Some would say it's what he's been doing all his life. Others will just see Cliff in a Cloak and he happy to enjoy it.

Spot the difference: Cliff then (left) and now (right)



DIARY

Future's Orange with black spots

It is an irony of which Jane Austen herself would approve. Orange happily boasts in its adverts that its mobile phone network covers up to 90 per cent of the UK, but this 90 per cent, it emerges, does not cover its own main headquarters in Darlington.

It seems that Hutchison Telecom, the network's co-ordinators, which has been experiencing trouble getting permission to erect masts in the north of England, is unable to receive and transmit signals within a mile radius of its own premises.

Such an embarrassment was not made public until last week, when one unfortunate Darlington citizen, Tony Hepper, who lives a mile from the plant (which employs the largest Darlington workforce) succumbed to the advertising blurb "the future is Orange" and tried to purchase a phone.

When he was told he lived in a cellular "black spot", and therefore could not have one, he thought it must be a joke. "I thought they were winding me up," he said yesterday. "I live right on their doorstep."

A spokeswoman at Hutchison Telecom was yesterday forced to corroborate the sad situation. Company executives apparently "experience trouble" using their phones once inside their offices. But what of Hepper's assertion that the phones also do not work inside the nearby Darlington football club stadium?

"Our mobiles work fine," a Darlington FC spokesman tells me, adding helpfully: "We're sponsored by Orange, you know."

Nabbed! We name the guilty cyclist

My heart bleeds for London's cyclists. One of their heroes – nay, idols – is sadly fallen. Jon Snow, Channel 4's newscaster and prince of two-wheeled travellers, was caught red-handed going

through a red light at the top of Camden's Judd Street on Tuesday morning. I know this for certain, because "was I who witnessed him do it. But now that I have apprised him of his illegal actions and my knowledge of them, he is suitably filled with remorse. "This is unforgivable," he moaned from his office yesterday. "What an aberration! I plead totally guilty. All those concerned for Mr Snow's welfare should know that his tears of self-castigation did not last overlong and that after a few minutes he recovered sufficiently to remark: "Of course, were there sufficient provision for cyclists then one would not have to resort to these drastic measures ..."



Lookalike Mr

IN CHARGE

At a meeting of the House of Commons, the Prime Minister, Mr. John Major, was asked by the Opposition to name the MP who had been caught on a bicycle.

Mr. Major replied: "The only MP who has been caught on a bicycle is the Member for the constituency of Gloucester, Mr. John Gummer."

Mr. Gummer, who is a member of the Conservative Party, was caught on a bicycle while on his way to work.

Mr. Gummer was fined £100 and given a three-month probation order.

Mr. Gummer has since resigned his seat in the House of Commons.

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Orchestral overtures to young music-lovers

Bournemouth Orchestra should be accused of ageism. Last week its administrators conducted a novel method of market research – it invited an audience comprised exclusively of school-children to come to a classical concert and give their reactions both to the music and to their setting: the town's Winter Gardens.

"We felt," explains a spokesman, "that older patrons might by nature be too fussy to be objective." I doubt, somehow, that their method has paid off. In response to the question: "What would have made the concert more enjoyable for you?" one overriding answer, worthy of the fussiest grandmas, came back from the 12- to 18-year-olds. It was "WD40 – the chairs squeak."

Peaceniks outshoot the warriors

A parable of war and peace in modern times was enacted last weekend when Bradford University's peace studies department played King's College war studies department in a "friendly" soccer match last Friday. The peaceniks won 15-0, although the team swears it did not use the expected tactics of persuading the opposition to just give them the ball and the goalkeeper to perform an act of Gandhi-style civil disobedience and lay down his gloves. "At the end of the day it was just a regular game of football," says a member of the peace team, adding in surprisingly pugilistic tones: "I don't expect we'll have such a great victory over them for a very long time."

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A child dies. The NHS crisis lives

On Tuesday, an official inquiry catalogued how 10-year-old Nicholas Goldard, dying from a brain haemorrhage, was shuttled between four hospitals because no paediatric intensive care beds could be found. That day Sir Roy Calne, one of Britain's most respected transplant surgeons, revealed that 11 of his patients died in the past year waiting for liver transplants because of a shortage of intensive care beds. We have learnt to live with long waiting times for operations in the National Health Service. But deaths such as this we find hard to accept.

Yesterday, Stephen Dorrell, the politically astute Health Secretary, set about making a crisis in these emergency services. A few weeks ago he launched a potentially far-reaching review of community care policies. Mr Dorrell is busy putting in place his party's defences against charges that are bound to be made during an election campaign that the Government has neglected the NHS. Yet his announced measures will fail to assuage the unease and warranted fears of those who rely on the NHS in times of emergency.

Mr Dorrell published a long list of guidance and advice requiring and requesting at hospital trusts and health authorities to give these emergency and intensive care services higher priority. He focused his attention particularly on paediatric intensive care beds, occupying the conclusion of the Goldard report that the time for looking about improving bed availability was over. Mr Dorrell expects to be told, by the end of April how the problem has been solved.

The Health Secretary wants greater emphasis on the creation of "high dependency units", a system for patients who

need more than ordinary ward care but less than intensive care. The aim is to reduce costs and take the strain off adult intensive care beds. He has also demanded greater co-ordination of the available beds, so a shortage in one area can be met by using surplus beds elsewhere. To improve casualty departments that are frequently logjammed he wants the workforce better organised and new guarantees for patients waiting for treatment.

All these organisational changes make good sense. Mr Dorrell is right to petition the various players in the NHS market - hospitals and health authorities - to make a better job of planning intensive care bed and casualty facilities.

But the Health Secretary must recognise that the problem goes beyond planning. Doctors do not find themselves jeopardising the lives of critically ill people simply because of poor organisation. The issue Mr Dorrell did not address yesterday was resources.

Changes in priorities and planning can make a difference, but with all hospitals concentrating on government targets to cut waiting times for operations, there is not that much room to shift resources within existing budgets.

New money will have to come from somewhere to address the shortages so clearly identified yesterday. Yet Mr Dorrell is not offering fresh financial help to struggling hospitals. Within the constraints of tight public sector finances, the poverty of his response is hardly surprising. But come the general election, Mr Dorrell should not be surprised if voters are unsympathetic with the Government's failure to meet popular expectations on such a critical issue.

Welcome to the life-saving pig

"It is ethical to eat a pig's liver, why was there ever any doubt that it is equally ethical to transplant it into a human?" That's OK for the dinner table, but not for the operating table, too. Not surprisingly, the Nuffield Council on Bioethics yesterday decided that there was no intrinsic ethical objection to xenotransplantation - the use of animal organs to save human lives.

No doubt some will shudder. There will be some spasms of revulsion, a yuck factor at the idea of a pig kidney at work inside a human; the first transplants will pawn plenty of cartoons about pig-people, just as there once were about test-tube babies. But it will pass. There will also be objections from believers in a strong version of animal rights that it is wrong for animals to be bred solely for human purposes. But these pigs will be bred in relative luxury compared with farm animals. When it comes to saving lives, that objection, too, will pass.

The real issue, as the report points out, concerns safety. For the first recipients of the organs, this may not be the issue, for they are likely to be those who are close to death and for whom this is the last chance. It will take time to assess the benefits, but if results are good, there is a chance that these new techniques using genetically engineered pigs will mean that humans can receive the organs without rejection.

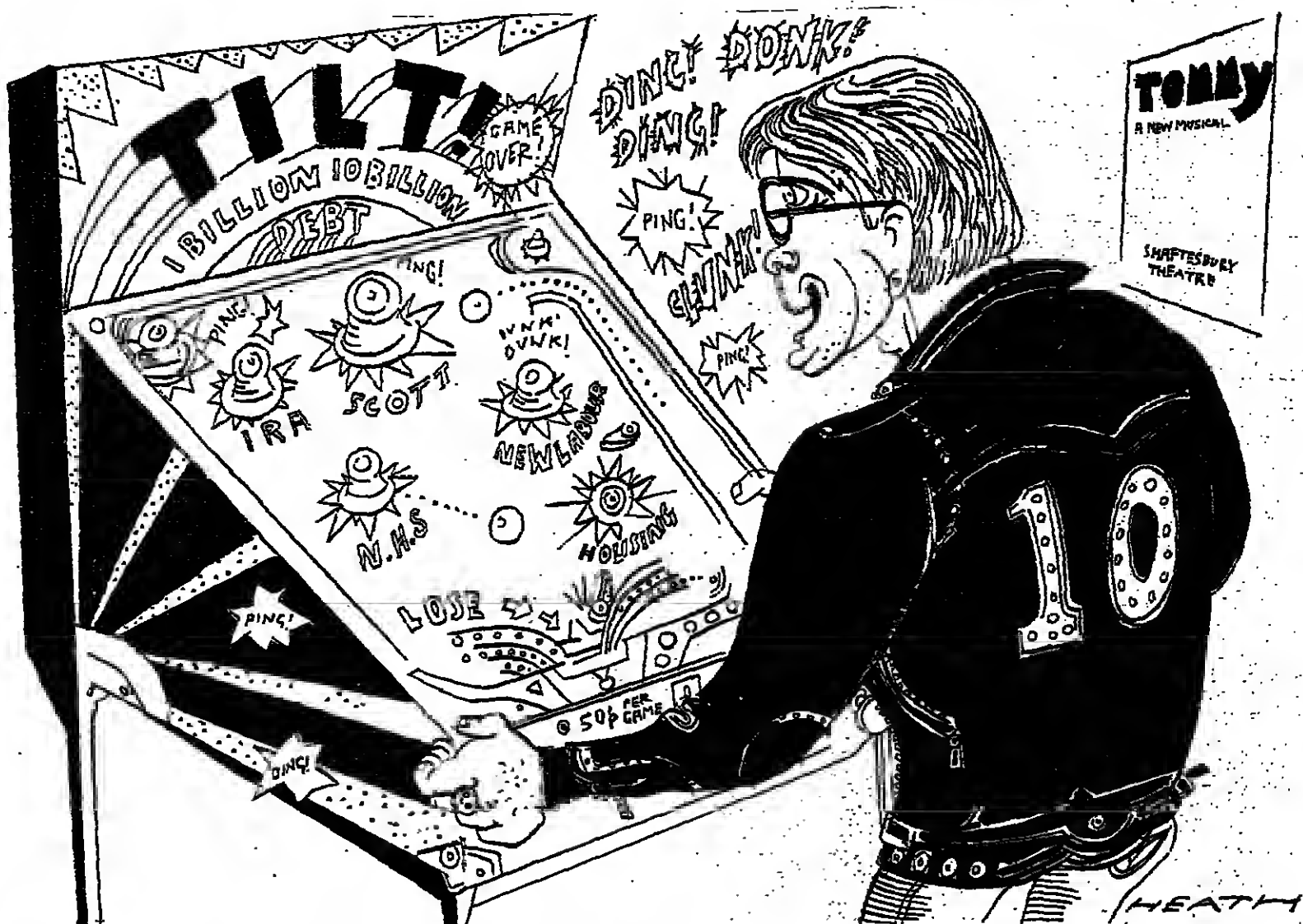
There is no doubting the demand, for the number of human organs available for transplant has fallen sharply in recent years. Here we get into calculations which

are harrowing, inescapable and ultimately life confirming. The compulsory wearing of helmets by motorcycle riders has reduced the number of young, fit people who die on ventilators. More sophisticated neurology means many who would have been put on ventilators now die far more quickly once it is established there is no hope for them. Even if we adopted the more sensible approach of assuming that all organs could be taken unless patients had previously registered objections, there would still never be enough organs to save all the lives of those who need them.

However, there are two long-term issues that need to be addressed before we should proceed.

The first is a doomsday scenario, a remote but alarming risk that putting animal tissue into a human could create a new retrovirus as lethal as Aids. For this reason the report recommends that no transplants should begin until a government committee, chaired by Professor Ian Kennedy, has made a scientific assessment of the precise degree of risk.

The second issue is whether the NHS can afford the kinds of treatment these scientific advances make possible. If we cannot afford enough intensive care beds now, how will we cope when transplants using pig organs are available? The demand for transplants will grow dramatically if they are an outstanding success. The price of these transplants is unknowable, though they will be expensive to start with. But it is sure to create another pressing demand which the NHS will find it hard to ration.



Pinball wizard

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Military gays less threat to morale than military police

Sir: I am surprised by all the brouhaha about "letting gays into the military" (report 5 March). Between 1979 and 1994 I served for over six years in the Royal Air Force and some eight years in the Territorial Army. To my certain knowledge there were homosexuals in every major unit or formation in which I served, both support and front line, yet at no time was I aware of any consequent lowering of morale. There were no queues of heterosexual servicemen or women outside the commanding officer's door requesting postings to "homosexual-free" units.

All the current attention serves to do is to ferment existing right-wing and homophobic prejudices within the services, the worst offenders being the service police, who seem to believe that there is a Communist under every bed and a homosexual in every shower cubicle. I once endured an eight-hour "interview" with an RAF Police officer (one of the most bigoted men I have ever met) because one or more of my fellow

officers thought my civilian clothes and mannerisms might have been a little out of the ordinary. No further action was taken, presumably because I am not homosexual, but it left a sour taste in the mouth for the remaining years of my service. My sympathies lie with the homosexual servicemen and women forced to keep their sexual orientation a secret in order to keep their jobs and I hope that Michael Portillo will reconsider his refusal to lift the ban.

SIMON HASTE
 London E17

Sir: The 97 per cent of servicemen and women who are against the recruitment of homosexuals have rights as well. Their objection is not that they would mind working with them, but it is a different matter living, sleeping and using the same bathroom. I served in the Navy in the 1950s before the Vassall spy case crackdown and I can tell you that living in the same mess as a homosexual can be quite unacceptable. I have a grandson who

is about to join the Army. I am not at all happy that he may, on exercise, be required to share a sleeping bag with a sexual deviate.

The wishes of the great majority of servicemen and women must not be overruled by the few who are able to make the most noise.

D BEEBY
 Gosport, Hampshire

Sir: You quote the report on the current ban as concluding that "homosexuality remains in practice incompatible with service life if the armed services... are to be maintained at their full fighting power." One may wonder how this relates to the performance of what must have been a significant proportion of those who made up the armed forces in the Second World War. At that time it was felt neither proper nor expedient to raise questions about the sexual credentials of people mobilised to fight in defence of such values as liberty and tolerance.

PATRICK GARDNER
 Oxford

Labour will offer transport choices

Sir: I read your article ("Motorways will grind to a halt in 20 years", 2 March) with interest. If the Government's do-nothing policy continues, they will bring much of the country to a standstill. They have made a mess of our transport system, consistently failing to invest in any alternative modes of transport, such as rail, cycling and the two feet we are blessed with. The next Labour government will seek to develop and implement an overall transport strategy, creating an infrastructure that will give people transport choices, rather than forcing people to sit in exhaust-filled cars on cracked and broken roads.

GRAHAM ALLEN MP
 (Nottingham North, Lab)
 House of Commons
 London SW1
 The writer is Shadow Minister for Transport

Religious tolerance is essential for a peaceable community

Sir: Paul Valley (4 March) deplores the fanatical rigours of religious moral absolutism, but he says secular tolerance has plunged us into a "quagmire of relativism".

We cannot afford to allow religious conviction, of whatever brand, and however sincere, to plunge us back into the fratricidal conflicts which were engendered by such blinkered self-righteousness in the 16th and 17th centuries. Those of us who believe that the toleration which underpins our democracy, far from being "thin gruel", is the essential mortar of a peaceable community can only view with the utmost foreboding the growing sectarian divisions being promoted within our educational and cultural life. If any one set of beliefs lays claim to respect and toleration, it must be prepared also to respect and tolerate the adherents of other belief systems, or of none.

"How much intolerance can we tolerate?" Hardly any, I should have thought.

A E G WRIGHT
 London NW2

Sir: Paul Valley refers to a post-Christian liberalism, combining tolerance with a sense of purpose, and asserts that to define such liberalism will not be an easy task. Humanity is perhaps the one word that includes a sense of purpose with tolerance. As all creatures want to reproduce and perpetuate their species, an objective for human beings might be to minimise all suffering and to enable our own species to go on living on this planet indefinitely, and so far as practicable to do so happily. That calls for respect - respect for people, respect for other sentient beings, for property, for biodiversity, and for the environment - coupled with endless vigilance and much hard work. Therein lies the real challenge.

As to education, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is clear: "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace" (Article 26).

It was, I think, Archbishop Tutu who suggested that education should help people to develop their God-given potential so as to become more fully human, with a humanity which for Christians is to be measured by nothing less than the humanity of Christ himself.

In the UK we should not have any education that offends against those concepts.

JOHN WYMER
 Bridport, Dorset

Poor EU script from Redwood

Sir: I read with much interest John Redwood's script for the future of Europe (4 March). It left me somewhat puzzled that he wants the UK to be the policeman of the Maastricht treaty. As for the UK to be the political voice of the Germans who want to keep their mark and the French who think the Maastricht criteria are a price too high, maybe that is better left to these countries' elected officials.

He also wants the UK to "block any move by Belgium into EMU as her debt levels are well outside the terms of the treaty". Belgium has indeed a high level of debt, the only one of the four criteria (the others are inflation, adherence to the ERM and interest levels) that needs adjusting. The Belgian public debt is almost entirely an internal debt, labelled in Belgian francs, and very serious efforts are currently being made to reduce it, as is generally acknowledged. I therefore submit this should rather be left to be decided by those of the member states who have not secured an opt out for themselves, even if technically the UK might be called to vote by qualified majority.

It is regrettable that so few seem to remember it was the Benelux countries who helped Britain into the then-EEC against French opposition and at Britain's persistent insistence during the Sixties and Seventies. And it was under Belgian presidency that in 1970 the decision was taken to open the enlargement negotiations.

P THUYSBALERT
 Ambassador
 Embassy of Belgium
 London SW1

Absurd to talk of a new fish war

Sir: There is no such thing as British fish any more than, across the Atlantic, there is such a thing as Virginian fish. There is only European fish ("Furious Tories threaten fish war", 6 March).

If this is not what Conservatives wanted then Sir Edward Heath should not have taken us into what is now the European Union and Baroness Thatcher should not have signed up to the Single Market.

Within the inter-governmental conference we might try to negotiate better rights for our fishermen in "our" waters but should ask ourselves what price would be demanded in other areas.

Another fish war? I think not. Last time we looked faintly ridiculous. This time we should look absurd.

J A DAVIS
 Lieutenant-Commander RN
 (Ret)
 Bookham, Surrey

Long trip for a bed

Sir: The US judge who ordered that Caroline Beale is to be treated in one of the London psychiatric hospitals ("US flees British woman found with baby's corpse", 5 March) is not to know that they are already full.

However, given that high-profile cases succeed where mere need fails, a psychiatric bed has already been found. Does this mean that people should fly to the US if their psychiatric state is about to deteriorate, in order to ensure that a bed in the UK will be made available?

Dr JIM STONE
 Hope, Derbyshire

False phobias and the ism schism

Today I am very pleased to have with me Professor Gosling, the newly appointed Reader in Political Correctness at the University of Milton Keynes, who has agreed to answer your questions on sexism, ageism, racism, feminism, and all the other -isms so fashionable today. Take it away, Prof!



MILES KINGSTON

Dear Professor Gosling, I am puzzled by the attitude of Michael Portillo and the Ministry of Defence to minorities in the armed forces.

Mr Portillo wants to maintain the ban on homosexuals on the services because, he says, the groundswell of opinion among serving personnel is anti-gay and therefore should be taken notice of. Fine. But a new report just out says there is similar prejudice against racial minorities in the forces, and that racism is widespread not just among the ranks but the officers as well. The MoD says it is well aware of this and desperately wants to reduce racism in the forces.

But what if Mr Portillo turns round and uses the same arguments in favour of racism as he did in favour of a gay ban? What if Mr Portillo says that racism is right because most people practise it? How can it be right to have homophobia in the services and not

racism? How can Mr Portillo argue against racism and for a gay ban?

Professor Gosling writes: You've got a rather good point there. I had not thought of that.

Dear Professor Gosling, Wouldn't the political correctness boys (and girls) have a better chance of getting their case across if they were more literate about it?

Take the word "homophobia", which has been coined to describe anti-gay prejudice. It sounds as if it means "fear of homos" but it does not mean that at all. "Homo" is the Greek word for "the same" ("homosexual" means "of the same sex"), so all that "homophobia" means is "fear of people who are the same as you" - which is the exact opposite of what you political correctness girls (and boys) want it to mean! What happens,

for instance, if there genuinely does turn out to be a condition involving fear and distrust of people who are the same as you? What would you call it then, eh? Well?

Professor Gosling writes: That's a very good point. I wish I had thought of it first.

Dear Professor Gosling, I think there is one aspect of political correctness which has never been aired properly, and that is the role of the suffix -ism.

As far as I can see, the overtones of this suffix have changed radically in the past 40 or 50 years, and no one has picked up on this. In the old days, an -ism was something you believed in. You believed in Communism, you believed in Fabianism, you believed in Cubism, you believed in Socialism and indeed in Tony Benn's case you still do. In fact, even in the case of Fascism, you believed in it if you were a Fascist.

All that has changed now. An -ism is something to be feared and hated and reviled. Racism and ageism and sexism are all bad. If you want to put something in a bad light you put -ism on the end and call it short-termism or sizeism, and everyone knows that it is meant to be bad.

Now, I suggest that this lands us in some problems. It means, for a start,

that any movement started today that wants to be respected and taken seriously is taking a risk if it calls itself an -ism. Even feminism must have this problem. I wager there are many people going round today who think that "feminist" is an insult, meaning "unfair to women".

It means that the word "Fascist" is now always used as an insult and never - more usefully - as a defining adjective applied to a person with Fascist views.

It means that people who try to use -ism words in an accurate, non-coloured sense - as when you call someone a monetarist or ideologist - always sound as if they are uttering insults or being very defensive. Republicanism, for instance, used to refer simply to people who thought that a republic was the best form of government. It is beginning to be taken to refer to a bunch of Irish bombers.

Given that all this is so, would it not be best to abandon all words ending with -ism and start again?

Professor Gosling writes: Oh God, you may be right. I wish I'd never got into this whole wretched business now.

Professor Gosling will be back here soon. And there again, she may not.

سكوت كينغ

Don't fudge it: the European question is Germany

Perhaps what is happening to Europe is irresistible, more about physics than politics. A united Germany, with its linguistic and economic mass spreading well beyond its physical borders, is bound to dominate everyone else. It is too big not to. Germany is the elephant on the European bed, and the rest of us feel vulnerable, squishable midges.

Germany has been the main European question since the 1870s. Attempts to answer the German question have followed in a thousand different guises: empire, grand treaties, war, fascism, war, division, American occupation, common market, unification, federalism. And still Germany is the great question, though one deliberately disguised in the abstract language of the EU.

For instance, after getting the final nod from today's cabinet meeting, the British government's White Paper on the Intergovernmental Conference will be published next week. Apart from Tory MPs, few people will be interested or excited by that. But had it been described, as it could have been, as "the conference on Germany", the public might have taken more serious note. And we should be interested. Apart from the frantic fringes of politics, most people have come lazily to accept the European Union as a fact of life, something that is "just there". But this isn't so. The EU cannot carry on without changing radically, and it has the capacity to destroy its old self. What is happening today, however quietly, is that the project is testing its own logic to breaking-point. The EU cannot keep growing larger, and introduce a single currency, and retain its current centralised political structure.

Poorer Eastern countries would struggle desperately, and almost certainly fail, to meet the monetary union tests. These will, in any case, cause further serious social strains in France and perhaps Germany, too, where the abandonment of the mark is unpopular. The huge transfer payments from rich areas to poorer areas that would be required by a single currency to avoid mass migrations imply new taxes for people who are already, by world standards, heavily taxed.

Behind those problems, and greater than them, is the question of whether monetary union would not require a single economic and fiscal policy – even a "single European Chancellor" to go along with the single European currency. My reading of mounds of paper on the subject (let no one say the life of a columnist is all cheap gossip and warm Chardonnay) suggests there is no economic consensus about this.

In general, the left assumes the need for some continent-wide economic policy to ensure a future for Keynesian welfare states and to help the poorer regions. Nationalist right-wingers agree, because they think the single currency is a trap leading Europe into full political union. But neoliberals and bankers disagree: they think that so long as countries are punished for over-borrowing (just as US cities are), and so long as people can travel freely from poor regions to more prosperous ones, this can be left to the market.

What I find astonishing and worrying is that this subject is treated so vaguely by the politicians who are determined on monetary union. At a meeting in Paris last year of civil servants, MPs, journalists and academics, it was clear that the French side had no agreed view on the political consequences of the monetary union to which they were committed. It seems a bit like bungee-jumping without measuring the drop.

There are other serious unresolved dilemmas aplenty. As Malcolm Rifkind pointed out this week, a European Union defence system embracing the former Warsaw Pact countries might tip Russia into outright hostility to the EU's plans for enlargement.

And then there is the core business of the looming conference, the cumbersome political system of the EU itself. It simply could not cope with serious enlargement. The point was made well by Perry Anderson, writing in the *London Review of Books*. Just enlarging the Union by adding the 16 states to the east to the 17 in the west would produce institutional gridlock: "the size of the European Parliament would swell towards 800 deputies; the number of Commissioners rise to 40; a 10-minute introductory speech by each minister attending a council would yield a meeting of five hours, before business even started."

Hence the plans for changes to the voting system, powers of the Commission and operation of the Council of Ministers to speed up decisions and stop countries blocking policy. These are, clearly, a threat to national power; but without such changes, the Union is condemned to suffocate in its fat like a beached whale.

These problems confront Europe not because of the manic powerlust of bureaucrats, as some Tories affect to think, but because of Germany and the fear of Germany felt, in particular, by France. European federalism plus the expansion to the east has been the German dream. It gives Germany everything Germany has wanted since it first became a European nation; great but legitimate influence, prosperity and safety.

And, broadly speaking, we should be heartily in favour of that; those are German national interests which are in every other European's interests too. But the real question is whether the full federal project, with all its unanswered dilemmas, doubtful democratic legitimacy and grand political ambitions is the only answer to the German question.

The Tory Euro-sceptics Iain Duncan Smith and Bill Cash, who have published a pamphlet on the subject, end it by stating that "The European answer to the German question is the missing piece in the jigsaw of the forthcoming Intergovernmental Conference. A failure to find it ... will destabilise Europe and the world well into the next millennium."

That is going a bit. My guess is that away from its impact on domestic British politics, which will be concerned mainly with referenda, fish, Sir James Goldsmith and similar matters, the conference will swap stronger institutional powers for more modest political ambitions. I also suspect that the timetable for the single currency will slip badly.

There is no awful crunch coming. But there are those dark, difficult questions about full integration and there may be better answers for Germany, and us. The surrounding big facts of life are relatively benign. The cause of free trade in Europe is mostly won. The alliances and interpenetration of our nations in one another's defences, and the relative prosperity of their peoples, makes serious European war seem almost unthinkable. We are possibly the first generation of Europeans since the heyday of the Roman Empire to feel this way.

And in this Europe, might not a normal German democracy flower, hugely influential but not resented for its size because of the sheer ordinariness of its ambition?

A Europe dominated by Ordinary Germany would be perfectly tolerable. The German language would become everyone else's second one. German culture and finance would be widespread and powerful. We in Britain would grow to regard Germany and its surrounding shadow of nations with the same mixture of exasperation and closeness that Canada feels for the United States. There are many worse fates. It would be a good and honest thing if next week's paper from the British government said so.

Canada has no choice but to accept the United States. We, too, must accept our giant neighbour



ANDREW MARR

The alliances of our nations make serious European war seem almost unthinkable

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That is going a bit. My guess is that away from its impact on domestic British politics, which will be concerned mainly with referenda, fish, Sir James Goldsmith and similar matters, the conference will swap stronger institutional powers for more modest political ambitions. I also suspect that the timetable for the single currency will slip badly.

There is no awful crunch coming. But there are those dark, difficult questions about full integration and there may be better answers for Germany, and us. The surrounding big facts of life are relatively benign. The cause of free trade in Europe is mostly won. The alliances and interpenetration of our nations in one another's defences, and the relative prosperity of their peoples, makes serious European war seem almost unthinkable. We are possibly the first generation of Europeans since the heyday of the Roman Empire to feel this way.

And in this Europe, might not a normal German democracy flower, hugely influential but not resented for its size because of the sheer ordinariness of its ambition?

A Europe dominated by Ordinary Germany would be perfectly tolerable. The German language would become everyone else's second one. German culture and finance would be widespread and powerful. We in Britain would grow to regard Germany and its surrounding shadow of nations with the same mixture of exasperation and closeness that Canada feels for the United States. There are many worse fates. It would be a good and honest thing if next week's paper from the British government said so.

'There is an educational nihilism in Britain that could prove catastrophic'

Two phrases leap out from yesterday's remarks on educational standards by Chris Woodhead, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools. The first is "white boys" and the second is "anti-educational cultures". The first is startling because of its identification of a specific racial category associated with underachievement, and the second because it marks an acceptance that in Britain there exists a distinct educational nihilism that could prove socially and economically catastrophic.

The issue of racial differences in any area is fraught; in education it is explosive. Clearly if Woodhead had made the same point about black boys, there would have been an instant detonation. When Paul Condon of the Metropolitan Police made the statistically uncontentious observation that blacks were disproportionately heavily involved in street crime, the idea was at once buried beneath the inflammatory rhetoric of race warfare.

It is in the nature of contemporary political dialogue that there is no such rhetoric to protect whites from the revelations – often admittedly spurious – of statistics or genetics. So Woodhead is safe; his remarks will not be called "racist". But his phrase about "white boys" raises precisely the same issue as the specification of a racial category in any context. If white boys are underachieving, is it because they are white or is their whiteness simply one aspect of their cultural predicament?

In fact, his identification of a specifically white problem in education works to discredit many of the assumptions previously made about racial differences. Most studies that have attempted to link race and IQ have tended to show that Orientals are the smartest, whites come second and blacks third. The existence of such clear-cut differences appears, at first sight, to be unsurprising. After all, obvious racial variations do exist, so it seems reasonable to assume that less obvious ones, such as academic ability, are as real as slanting eyes or curly hair.

However, most of the studies are compromised by fundamental conceptual flaws. First, genetics has



BRYAN APPELEYARD

tended to show that racial differences are superficial; variations within a population are far greater than variations between populations. Second, intelligence is still not sufficiently well defined to make it convincingly measurable. Third, many studies suggest that changes in environment – say, moving a child from a poor area to a rich one – can produce changes in IQ far greater than any differences arising from purely inherited factors. And fourth, no such study can be convincingly scientific because of the impossibility of isolating environmental from inherited factors in human populations.

So Woodhead's observation that whites are doing badly is strong evidence against the depressingly numerous, supposedly scientific and usually dumbly right-wing studies which suggest that blacks are intrinsically intellectually inferior. That is good news, not because it undermines the serious study of racial differences but because it helps to undermine the stupid, politically corrupted study of racial differences. Obviously we may one day find something to say about mass human variation on the basis of race or genetics, but it will certainly not be a glibly mechanistic linkage of colour and intelligence.

Against the dumb left it should also be added that identifying a problem among whites tends also to discredit the belief among blindly ideological race warriors that racism is at the root of all disadvantage. In short: nothing is reducible to the more mindless slogans of either the right or the left. More good news.

But Woodhead's second phrase – "anti-educational cultures" – is not good news and it is made less good by the fact that he is plainly right.

One of the great mysteries of education in Britain has been the quiescence of parents. No one within the spectrum of serious politics now doubts that, during the past 30 years, British education has failed. Particularly among the poorest and most disadvantaged, our standards are horribly low compared with those of other developed countries. One in five seven-year-olds in London schools scores zero in reading tests.

Worse still, our system has produced appalling social divisions. School league tables may be an imperfect guide, but the grossness of the disparity they reveal between the worst and the best is overwhelming evidence that we are busily dumping huge numbers of children into defective schools.

Yet the parents have done almost nothing. Do they protest outside the gates of these sink schools? They do not. Do they beseech the grumpy workers of the teachers' unions? Never. Now we have one possible explanation – the quiescence of parents itself may be part of an anti-education culture. Not enough parents take education seriously enough.

Anecdotal, I have been convinced of the existence of such a culture for some time. I have asked criminals with virtually no education why their parents did not attempt to push them through school. The answer, invariably, was: because they did not care, education was to them little more than a temporary inconvenience; it had no obvious worth.

The first official awareness of the possibility that we have an anti-educational culture came in a report from the Select Committee on Education last year. That is now endorsed by Woodhead. But how has it happened? And why are white boys such victims of this culture?

"Anti-educational cultures", he writes, "grow out of the experience of educational failure." These are carefully hedged words that do not immediately offer consolation either to the right or the left. The left, for example, may argue that unemployment produces educational despair: what is the point if there are no jobs? But this is a contemptible argument that patronises the poor by suggesting they are incapable of seeing any value in education other than the most immediately functional. Clearly dismal job prospects do not help, but, equally clearly, it is absolutely better to have some education than to have no education at all. The employment picture may change and, in any case, everybody is better off knowing something rather than nothing.

Not to believe in the absolute value of education is to be a nihilist because it amounts to a disbelief in all human culture. If, as seems to be the case, there is a hard-core anti-education group in this country, then we have some dangerous nihilists in our midst, people who are effectively writing themselves out of a constructive participation in society, not just this society but any society. We might try to console ourselves with the thought that there will always be such an irreducible hard core. But, alarmingly, the dawning recognition of this phenomenon is accompanied by the assertion that it may be distinctively British, at least in its scale.

So the underachieving white boy phenomenon is a terrible warning. It cannot yet, as Woodhead admits, be fully explained and it may still prove less serious than it at first appears. But for me it feels right. It indicates that deep in the culture there is a loss of faith, a profound disbelief in any kind of continuity or achievement. It indicates, above all, that the defence of the culture against, among other things, the moronic slogans of the right and the left is now more urgent than ever.



Schoolchildren – white boys, girls, blacks – it is stupid to predict educational achievement by genes

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Perfect casting for theatre's most demanding role



Trevor Nunn: spectacular career

Thelma Holt applauds the choice of Trevor Nunn as director of the National

I am delighted – and very relieved – to learn of Trevor Nunn's appointment to succeed Richard Eyre as director of the National Theatre. Although the appointment committee must have been tempted to take the advice of those, including the *Independent*, who urged the appointment of a younger director, "someone who is hungry and wants to make their reputation through their work at the National" (leading article, 20 February), I do not believe that anyone who has not themselves run a large organisation can have any perception of what it is like to run the National.

In addition to needing the experience to be able to run three auditoria, an educational arm and an international venue, with responsibilities not only to London but to the rest of the country and to represent us overseas, the director of the National must be a politician who can deal with government ministers and Arts Council officials one moment, and then speak the language of the coal-

face to actors and technicians the next. I spent five very happy years working there as a producer, and with an insider's eye I can say that I would not want the job myself if I were offered the earth.

With the best will in the world towards our brilliant young theatrical Turks, it would have been a great mistake to have put one of them in the directorship. Trevor Nunn's first task will be to get himself accepted by the people who work there. With his spectacular career to date – head of the Royal Shakespeare Company at 28, director of musicals such as *Cats* and *Les Miserables*, and successful stage plays such as Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* – Trevor will have no difficulty getting the building behind him.

When directing a play, you enclose yourself in a little fantasy world; sometimes the concentration is so great that you do not even hear the four-minute warning. If the director of the National is also a practitioner – and it is very important that Trevor himself should do pro-

ductions – he must be generous enough not to resent the fact that he must come in an hour early and come back later to face the catering, administration and education departments, take phone calls from that show on tour, and yet still get on with his own productions. Trevor has that discipline.

He also has the track record to continue to hold the door open to the young. He has proved himself, so he can afford to be generous to others. In fact, it is Trevor's generosity of spirit that made me know from day one that I wanted the job to go to him.

The National Theatre has had only three directors since it began: Laurence Olivier, Peter Hall and Richard Eyre. Olivier, of course, was the founding spirit; and although he was not there long, he got the theatre up and running in those wonderful, heroic days when actors had the opportunity to train and perfect their craft in repertory companies.

Peter Hall was the politician par excellence. His great quality

was that he could sup with any devil and come out of it whole. He had a high regard for talent and could gather it around him, delegate magnificently and inspire people's ambitions. Consequently, under his stewardship there was enormous variety.

Richard Eyre's great quality was his humanity. He knitted that building together when he came in, although those were times of stress. And he brought in more new work and more new directors.

Trevor Nunn is taking over at a time when risk-taking is going to be dangerous. But risks are necessary in theatre, and he will be extremely clever at taking calculated ones.

My only regret is that I serve on the Arts Council with Trevor, and I fear that his new appointment may cause us to lose him. The theatre needs him there, too.

Thelma Holt's new RSC production, *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme*, opened last night at the Barbican.

BSkyB makes first move into Europe

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB yesterday plunged into the Continental pay-TV market, spending \$270m for a 25 per cent stake in Premiere, the leading German channel that holds the rights to Bundesliga football, Germany's version of the Premiership.

The investment will be followed by a strategic alliance with three Continental media companies - Havas, Canal Plus and Bertelsmann - to develop digital television, in a move that heralds far closer co-operation among the big European pay-television players.

BSkyB, 40 per cent owned by Mr Murdoch's News Corporation, had been widely tipped to expand from its UK base, using its financial might to gain a foothold in the main European markets. Sky is Europe's largest pay-TV company, and its growth has been powered by exclusive rights to broadcast films and sport, including matches of the Premiership.

Yesterday's developments finally gave Mr Murdoch a foothold in the developing digital television market on the Continent. He is already a main partner of MCI in a planned US digital service. The new alliance, presently called Newco, will be owned 30 per cent by BSkyB, 30 per cent by Canal Plus, the pioneering French pay-TV company, and 30 per cent by Bertelsmann, the German publishing and TV giant. Between them, the three have secured most of the slots available on the digital satellites being launched by Astra, the Luxembourg-based satellite company, over the next year.

Bertelsmann and Mr Murdoch's parent company, News Corp, already share a pay-TV channel, Vox, in Germany. Yesterday's announcement is unlikely to alter that arrangement. Havas, the French media company, will hold a non-voting 10 per cent stake in the new alliance. It will also have an indirect stake via its 24 per cent stake in Canal Plus. Premiere, which has 1.1 million subscribers, is currently owned by the Kirch Group, Bertelsmann and Canal Plus. Following BSkyB's investment, the four companies will each hold 25 per cent of the channel.

Premiere's digital service is scheduled to be launched in Germany within a few months, and will give BSkyB its first opportunity to manage a new generation of satellite services. BSkyB is believed to be betting that the successful introduction of digital satellite TV in Germany, the biggest European market, will bring down the cost of developing similar services in the UK.

None the less, analysts expect the company to move slowly in its core British market, where it is already the dominant provider of pay-TV on analogue. "It is not in Sky's interest to move too early in the UK, given how much money it has managed to generate through its existing satellite services," said one leading City analyst.



Football fan: Rupert Murdoch now has Bundesliga interests

BSkyB has been looking at Continental investments for several months, and seriously considered taking a stake in CLT, the Luxembourg-based media company that has extensive UK media interests.

German jobless total hits record 4m total

DIANE COYLE
Economics Correspondent

German unemployment reached a new post-war record of almost 4 million last month. A shock increase during February raised the spectre of recession in Europe's biggest economy.

Economists predicted that unemployment would continue to rise for at least several months, even though many expect the Bundesbank to cut its key discount rate within weeks. Ralph Sippel, at JP Morgan in Frankfurt, said: "The unemployment number will confirm to the Bundesbank that the economy is heading for a slump and give them more scope to ease monetary policy."

Figures for Germany's GDP today could show that the economy contracted in the final quarter of 1995. The first quarter of 1996 is likely to turn out even weaker, and two successive quarters of negative growth would put the economy formally in recession.

The Government's official forecast predicts growth of 1.5 per cent this year, but others believe it will be lower. In a sign of the increasing gloom about prospects, the influential publication *Wirtschaftswache* today forecasts zero growth.

BAT profits from rise in smoking

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Soaring sales of BAT's 250 brands of cigarettes pushed profits at the tobacco financial services conglomerate to record levels last year. Growing numbers of smokers around the world more than made up for the damage still being inflicted on the group's financial services arm by alleged mis-selling of personal pensions.

New chairman Lord Cairns, who recently took over from Sir Patrick Sheehy, dismissed talk of a possible demerger of the two sides of BAT but left the door open on a rumoured takeover of Hanson's tobacco subsidiary Imperial.

Describing 1995 as an outstanding year for BAT, he warned that growth this year would not match the underlying 21 per cent rise in group profits in the 12 months to December. He also heralded an imminent shake-up of the financial services division where teams are currently reporting on ways to reduce duplication of resources between life insurer Allied Dunbar, general cover provider Eagle Star and the newly formed Threadneedle Asset Management.

There was no indication of potential job losses in financial services but the company admitted there would inevitably be further cuts following the recent axing of about 700 staff from a combined workforce of 13,000.

Buoyant sales of cigarettes in Brazil, together with the acquisition at the end of 1994 of American Tobacco, led to a 54 per cent rise in profits from the tobacco division from £1,028m to £1,568m. Even excluding a £191m provision in 1994's result to cover reorganisation of American Tobacco, profits rose 29 per cent.

That boosted a more modest 7 per cent rise in insurance returns to give a 26 per cent rise in group profits from £1,890m to £2,380m. Shareholders were rewarded with a 10 per cent hike in the full-year dividend to 24p. During the year BAT sold 670 billion cigarettes, 100 billion more than in 1994, taking its share of the global market from 10.7 per cent to 12.4 per cent. BAT hit out yesterday at attempts by the American Food and Drug Administration, the US watchdog, to extend its jurisdiction to the cigarette market and to attempts by a number of states to recover the cost of providing smoking related healthcare from the tobacco industry.



Glaxo Wellcome said yesterday it had shed 6,000 jobs as a result of the £9.3bn merger with Wellcome last year, well ahead of plans to axe 7,500 employees over three years. Richard Sykes (left), deputy chairman and chief executive, and John Coombe, finance director, unveiled a 30 per cent increase in underlying profits to £2.5bn. Investment column, page 20

Telecoms: Government plans to open up international market as C&W takeover speculation mounts

Plans to end BT and Mercury duopoly

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

The Government is set to end the BT and Mercury duopoly over international telephone services from the UK, which removes the last main restriction in the telecommunications industry. Lord Taylor, minister for science and technology, said yesterday that the proposal, if it went ahead, would save consumers up to £140m a year in lower bills and could result in total losses for BT and Mercury "on a similar scale".

US companies including BT's arch-rival, AT&T, have been lobbying the Government for years for the ability to offer international services in their own right. At present companies needing links from the UK must rely on capacity leased from BT and Mercury or simply pay them to carry the calls.

Mr Taylor said: "Opening up the market in international telecoms services will boost competition and lower prices. It would make the UK a key location for inward investors who increasingly need cheap, high quality telecoms services, basing their European operations in the UK."

He said that depending on the comments he receives by 15 April the Government could soon be inviting new operators to apply for licences. It is understood that the initial objective is to free up links to other Europeans but with wider liberalisation to follow later.

City analysts said that the move could hurt Mercury - part of the Cable & Wireless group - much more than BT. Mercury declines to say how much of its revenue comes from international calls. However, according to the regulator, Ofcom, the company's share of the international market is 25 per cent compared to 8 per cent within the UK.

C&W in joint venture discussions

BT is in discussions with Cable & Wireless over potential collaboration and joint ventures around the world. The talks include the delivery of BT services over C&W networks, writes Mary Fagan.

The discussions emerge amid heightening speculation that BT will bid for C&W, which for months has been the subject of takeover rumours. C&W's stock market value is almost £10bn.

BT declines to comment on any potential bid. However there is a view in the City that the company could launch a joint takeover with AT&T of the US, which is thought to be interested in acquiring C&W's Mercury subsidiary in the UK.

BT is keen to expand in areas where C&W has strengths, including the Asia Pacific region. According to Peter Bonfield, BT's new chief executive: "To be the most successful global telecommunications company in 20 to 30 years time we will need to be much bigger in the East."

Exchange firms want time to make changes

JOHN EISENHAMMER
Financial Editor

The Stock Exchange is expected to recommend a mixed system of share trading in London following publication yesterday of the results of its largest market consultation programme. The responses exposed deep rifts over replacing London's traditional market-making system with the kind of electronic dealing system common in other major financial centres.

The consultation showed broad support for reform and widespread expectation that some form of order-driven dealing system will be introduced. But it also revealed opposition among the most influential single group of powerful market makers and big institutions.

The responses called overwhelmingly for more time to prepare for the changes. "The message is not as clear as we would have liked, but there is a mandate for change," said an exchange source. A recommendation for change will be put to the Stock Exchange board on 21 March. There will then be a second phase of consultation on the details and timing.

Most firms felt that between nine and 12 months would be needed to develop and test systems after the detailed regulations for the new structure were released.

The exchange is expected to recommend a three-tier system, which would introduce order-driven dealing for small trades in the top FTSE stocks, while enabling the traditional market making system to continue for medium to big trades, as well as negotiated deals for the very large trades.

This would allow market makers to continue to dominate trading, with the exchange hoping that the size of trades done by order-driven dealing can be expanded progressively.

STOCK MARKETS									
FT-SE 100		Dow Jones		Nikkei		Hang Seng		Frankfurt	
3798.90	-18.20	8781.30	2554.20	3.92	11778.73	-75.35	2501.22	1910.96	1.851
Money Market Rates									
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year
UK	6.09	6.06	7.82	8.72	7.96	8.70	UK	5.22	5.22
US	5.22	5.22	6.04	7.35	6.83	7.55	Japan	0.50	0.73
Germany	3.31	3.31	6.30	7.42	7.11				
MAIN PRICE CHANGES									
House of Fraser	168	11	6.2	Esprit	77	4	4.9	House of Fraser	168
South West Water	538	30	5.9	Glaxo Wellcome	875	44	4.8	South West Water	538
Group	612	27	4.6	T & N	165	6	3.5	Group	612
INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling		UK medium 20Y		US long bond		Euro area		Japan	
1.54	2.27	6.04	7.35	6.83	7.55	1.54	2.27	6.04	7.35
CURRENCIES									
£/\$		£/DM		£/¥		Pound		Dollar	
1.54	2.27	1.54	2.27	1.54	2.27	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Yesterday
\$1 (London)	1.5394	+0.16c	1.6235	\$1 (London)	0.6539	-0.06	0.616	\$1 (London)	1.5394
\$1 (New York)	1.5295	unch	1.6025	\$1 (New York)	0.6538	unch	0.622	\$1 (New York)	1.5295
DM (London)	2.2556	-0.38pt	2.2494	DM (London)	1.4750	-0.35pt	1.3855	DM (London)	2.2556
¥ (London)	161.002	+0.397	147.162	¥ (London)	105.275	+0.15	90.645	¥ (London)	161.002
Index	85.6	unch	86.0	Index	96.6	unch	90.7	Index	85.6
OTHER INDICATORS									
Oil Brent		Gold		GDP		Base Rates		Next Day	
18.10	+0.14	167.9	150.2	+2.80pt	148.0	21 Mar	107.1	0.50pt	105.1
25.45	+0.02	233.702	Base Rates	0.25pt	8.75				

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business

House of Fraser chief is forced to quit

NIGEL COPE

The lamentable record at the House of Fraser department store group finally took its toll yesterday when the group's managing director, Andrew Jennings, was forced out by the non-executive directors.

His departure, with immediate effect, follows a period which has seen House of Fraser issue four profits warnings in its two years as a public company. Separately, merchandise director Ruben Sharp is to leave just four months after joining. She is leaving of her own volition to take a job in Italy.

Mr Jennings joined House of Fraser in 1992. He was on a salary of £271,000 a year and had a one year contract. He also

holds 440,000 share options at 180p, which become exercisable next year.

The chairman, Brian McGowan, is to take over the day-to-day running of the Dickens & Jones and Army & Navy group until a new managing director is appointed. Mr McGowan's own position has been under threat after he staked his reputation on the company's success.

Speculation has been rife that the former Storehouse chief executive, David Dworkin, is in line for Mr Jennings' position. The company said yesterday that it had had no communication with Mr Dworkin. "We will consider anybody qualified for the job. The main priority is to spend

time getting it right," a spokesman said. The market reacted with relief that some change had at last been effected. The shares jumped 11p to 185p compared

Powerhouse shops sold

Hanson announced yesterday that it has sold its Powerhouse chain of electrical shops to the group's management for an undisclosed sum, writes Nigel Cope. The deal - which saves 1,400 jobs - includes 94 high street shops and 28 out of town superstores in the Midlands, Home Counties and Eastern England.

The previously announced closure of the remaining 195

with the 180p issue price two years ago. John Richards at NatWest Securities said: "House of Fraser is one of those companies that had got to the stage where any

change would be decreed as good news."

Tony Shirett at BZW said the market had over-reacted to the management changes. "The shares are still overvalued. They need a credible replacement as chief executive and the performance has to improve."

Institutions had expressed concern about the performance of the company, though it is thought they had not exerted direct pressure for boardroom changes. One institutional shareholder said: "The board has probably done the right thing. The record has obviously been very disappointing."

House of Fraser's non executive directors include Ian Martin, the chairman of Unigate, who also heads the UK division

of Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, the leveraged buyout specialists. House of Fraser came to the stock market with great fanfare in April 1992. The well known department store names and the presence on the board of Mr McGowan, the former Williams Holdings star, lured in more than 100,000 private investors. But the company has been beset by problems ever since. Its buying and stock control has been poor, resulting in drastic discounting, which has affected margins.

The final straw for management was the latest profits warning in January. The company said a good Christmas had not been enough to make up for a grim autumn when stores were left with vast stocks of unsold coats and winter garments.

CITY DIARY

John Willcock

Accentuating the positive at the Pru

Newspapers are often accused of only being interested in negative stories. How nice, then, to record that the Prudential received glowing praise from the press in the final quarter of 1995.

British Gas, unsurprisingly, received a real hammering. According to the latest Presswatch Quarterly, which counts up how many positive and negative reports on companies appear in the national press, The Pru finished top with a rating of 738. Asda closed the quarter in second position with 668. Others in the top five were Rover with 665, Fiat with 655 and National Savings with 607.

The companies which came bottom make up a PR nightmare. Out of the 1135 companies surveyed British Gas came bottom with -2077. British Rail scored -1977, Trafalgar House -1287, Cable & Wireless -965 and BT-763. Bob Hoskins notwithstanding, Alcohol and tobacco companies did better than utilities while for some strange reason, accountancy firms got an average -62. Do we really hate the bean counters so much?

You've been sacked. You thirst for revenge. Maxim magazine has come up with a number of tips for what to do when you're given 20 minutes to clear your desk.

Grah some letterheads and launch a negative PR campaign by sending out crazed rubbish to clients ("Please be warned that the ToastGlow

toilet seat warmer you have just purchased may be liable to explosions.") or to the local press ("Toasting Glow Boss in Sex Romp with Underage Nun and Halibut Shock!").

Now that photocopying repair men are well dressed, no one will challenge you and a couple of your mates as you carry the office Miantha away. This also works with fax machines.

The magazine also suggests poaching the secretary. "They've taken your job, you take their women." Another tip: distribute other members of staff's business cards while drunk and disorderly at parties.

David Wellings has decided to retire as chief executive of Cadbury Schweppes at the comparatively tender age of 55, after a three-year stint in the hot seat.

Part of the reason for his early departure may be that he is to spend six months of each year in Majorca.

Yesterday Mr Wellings told journalists at the company's annual results press conference that he wanted to write "the best book on ornithology in Majorca ever written".

When not bird watching, Mr Wellings will spend time looking after his remaining non-executive directorship at Signet, but there will be no more entrepreneurial projects.

This is a real retirement, he stressed. "I love it there (in Majorca) and I want to see more of my wife."

Airbus secures lion's share of \$6bn lease deal

RUSSELL HOTTEN

Airbus Industrie, the European aircraft manufacturing consortium in which British Aerospace is a partner, has beaten its arch-rival Boeing to win the lion's share of a \$6bn (£4bn) contract for 50 aircraft.

The deal with International Lease Finance is one of the biggest placed with Airbus, and helps to ease the huge disappointment it felt after losing a \$1.7bn Singapore Airlines order to Boeing in December.

Yesterday's announcement also includes an order for 130 aircraft engines, thought to be worth about \$140m, shared by Rolls-Royce, Pratt and Whitney, and GE-CFM, the US-French joint venture.

Los Angeles-based ILF - which leases aircraft to scheduled airlines and charter operators - has placed a firm order for 38 Airbus aircraft, with options on a further eight, and becomes the first company to acquire the consortium's new wide-body A330-200 jet. The aircraft have a book value of about \$3.6bn.

The Airbus orders from ILF also include 13 twin-engine A330-200s, and 12 of the four-engine A340-300s - the aircraft with the longest range in the world, about 9,300 miles. The deliveries to ILF are to begin in May 1997.

ILF is also buying 18 Boeing 777s, with a further two options, for about \$2.6bn. Airbus has about 30 per cent of the world share of aircraft sales, against Boeing's 60 per cent.

Jean Pierson, managing director of Airbus, said: "With more than 70 Airbus Industrie aircraft leased and currently in service with some 30 operators throughout the world, ILF has

helped us increase our market penetration even further."

Airbus said it is also talking to Tunisia's airline Tunis Air about providing replacements for its 11 Boeing 727s and 737s.

Rolls-Royce said yesterday that its order for Trent engines was worth about \$175m. The company will supply two Trent 800 engines for each of four Boeing 777s and two Trent 700s for each of four Airbus A330-200 aircraft.

GE Aircraft Engines and CFM International, which is jointly owned by GE and Snecma of France, said that its contract for 86 engines was worth about \$11m. Pratt and Whitney is supplying 11 engines in a deal worth \$240m.

Meanwhile, Boeing today publishes its annual market forecast for the aircraft sector, predicting that the worst is over for the depressed sector. Nancy Bethel, vice president of marketing for Boeing, said: "Our industry appears to have made it through the bottom of the cycle."

Orders for new aircraft throughout the industry more than doubled in 1995 to 714, and it was the first time since 1990 that orders exceeded deliveries. The report said that the world's airlines are expected to buy 15,900 aircraft worth \$1,100bn over the next 20 years. Two out of three of these aircraft will be delivered outside the United States.

The figures are based on Boeing's projection for world economic growth of 3.2 per cent a year. Passenger traffic is expected to grow at 5.1 per cent a year throughout the world with travel in the Asia-Pacific region growing the fastest at 7.1 per cent. Air travel growth in China will average 11.5 per cent.



Beyond the wasteland: Things are looking up on Tyneside for Swan Hunter, which went into receivership three years ago

Swan revival means 1,200 jobs

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

Swan Hunter, the Tyneside shipyard, yesterday staged a comeback with a £50m contract which will create 1,200 jobs and bring a much needed boost to the area. THC, the Dutch firm which bought the yard less than a year ago said the award is "exciting and more than we expected" so soon after taking over the Swan Hunter facilities.

The contract is for the final stage of conversion of the world's biggest pipelaying vessel, the Solitaire, which is owned by the Swiss Allseas group. The 285 metre-long ship is due

to arrive on the Tyne next month from Singapore, where earlier work was carried out.

The project manager, Jan Vonder, said: "As Solitaire sails up the Tyne next month, the sheer magnitude will without doubt remind people of the days past, when Swan Hunter was a world-renowned yard for turning out major ships and specialised vessels."

It is now three years since Swan went into receivership although work on frigates kept the company going until late 1994.

Mr Vonder added: "We expect the very best of those employed to show the construction industry that Swan Hunter can

once again be a name associated with first-class performance."

He said that THC has invested heavily in facilities and retraining local personnel to convert the shipyard into more of a multi-purpose construction yard in order to meet today's market requirements. The company is now pursuing potential deals worldwide in the hope of securing continuity of employment.

Mr Vonder said: "We believe we have the right corporate structure, management and expertise to deal with any type of contract whatever its complexity."

The company has already

been inundated with 4,000 applications for jobs in local anticipation of the deal. Jan Velthuis, managing director of Swan Hunter said: "Although a tough first project for the new Swan Hunter yard, I believe there is ample talent in this area to select the very best workforce."

Tom Brennan, chairman of the Tyne Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions and one of the leaders of a campaign to save the yard, said: "I am delighted with today's development. We are seeing the re-emergence of Swan Hunter, which is rising from the ashes almost three years since going into receivership."

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Glaxo cost cuts are crucial for life after Zantac

Last year was always going to be a transition year for Glaxo Wellcome, but yesterday's figures clearly confused some in the City. The 44p slide in the shares to 876p came in spite of figures which carried few surprises for most people. They did, however, require a deal of interpretation.

Glaxo having splashed out £9.3bn for rivals Wellcome in March and then changed the year end from June to December, the scope for confusion was always going to be large.

The bald figures for the 18-month period to December showed profits of £2.39bn, as against £1.84bn in the previous 12 months. More meaningful were annualised results which saw pre-tax profits rising from £1.93bn to £2.51bn in 1995.

The figures excluded integration costs for Wellcome, which at £1.22bn, were bang in line with the group's estimate made in mid-year. Glaxo remains on target to achieve cost savings of £700m a year by the end of 1998.

Achieving those savings is going to be increasingly important after Zantac, the group's blockbuster anti-ulcer drug, goes off-patent in the US and UK in July 1997. Here the market's nerves look more justified. Last year's 4 per cent fall in sales of Zantac will be as nothing compared with the cliff they will dive off in 1997. Sales of the drug crashed 33 per cent last year in Germany after it went off-patent. In the main US market, the impact could be closer to the 80 per cent fall suffered by SmithKline Beecham's Tagament after it lost patent protection.

Glaxo was yesterday highlighting the 43 per cent growth in sales of new drugs introduced since 1990 as evidence that the decline of Zantac can be absorbed. But, at 17 per cent, new drugs' share of total sales still lags Zantac's by 11 points. It could be 1999 before they can fill the hole left by the world's most successful drug.

Further out, the potential is certainly there. Respiratory drugs grew a fifth last year, based on long-established treatments like Ventolin. But Flutide, the new inhaled steroid, could be worth \$1bn in sales by the end of the century and Serenit could more than double current sales of \$425m.

In the short term, earnings may slip beyond

the current year, when Lehman Brothers expects profits to hit £2.9bn. A forward price/earnings ratio of 16 looks high enough, unless Glaxo gives a shove to growth by buying something else.

Surprises make an impact on Cadbury

It has been quite a year for Cadbury Schweppes. 1995 started with the £1bn acquisition of Dr Pepper, the largest deal in the group's history. Then came the long hot summer which boosted sales of soft drinks to record levels, but saw chocolate sales melt away. By the year-end the company had signed deals in Canada that made it the country's number one confectionary group.

Yesterday's results presentation was not short of surprises. Unfortunately for the share price, most of them had a negative impact. First, David Wellings, the highly regarded chief executive has decided to retire to Majorca after just three years at the helm. The company is also seeking a full listing in the US following the Dr Pepper deal, which has transformed Cad-

bury's US market share and sparked more interest in the group among American institutions.

The results themselves were not without a few surprises. Pre-tax profits were 10 per cent ahead at £526m in the year to December on sales up 19 per cent to £4.8bn. However, the market reacted badly to the higher integration costs at Dr Pepper, which have risen from £30m to £49m, although the business has performed slightly better than expectations. In the Schweppes drinks division, sales were up 28 per cent and trading profits 52 per cent ahead. Though the hot UK summer boosted volumes by 11 per cent, profits were down due to increased competition from own brands and higher promotional costs.

The summer heatwave and start-up costs in Eastern Europe meant the confectionary division had a tougher year. Sales edged ahead by 8 per cent to £1.98bn and profits limped up 3 per cent to £240m. The margin fell by 0.6 percentage points. However, the company is investing in new markets such as Poland, China and Argentina with a factory already under construction in Russia. All of this makes Cadbury's £10.6m profit from its stake in Camelot, the lottery operator, a mere drop in the ocean.

A number of short term issues still remain to be resolved. The US listing is not necessary

ly going to be a guaranteed success, while the appointment of a successor to David Wellings is also crucial. But in the longer term Cadbury Schweppes looks a steady performer with quality brands. Merrill Lynch is forecasting profits of £600m for the current year. With the shares down 19p at 536p the shares are on a forward rating of 15. Hold.

Asbestos cloud still hangs over T&N

T & N, the engineering group formerly known as Turner & Newall, is making much of what it claims is a new chapter in the long-running saga of its asbestos claims.

Certainly the sale of the last remaining mining interests earlier this week and last December's US court ruling, throwing out Chase Manhattan's claim for contamination of its head office, appeared to draw a line under two aspects of the sorry affair. But an asbestos cloud will continue to hang over the group well into the next century.

Whatever happens, the problem will remain for some time. Yesterday's figures for the 12 months to December, which saw profits leap from £10.7m to £120m, were again littered with provisions for asbestos claims, albeit cut from £140m to £51.3m.

Underlying provisions of £45m are likely to continue at the same level in the current year and even optimists believe they could still be running at £30m by the millennium.

Positive cash flow of £14.8m last year after asbestos provisions and a £19m uplift in capital expenditure to £152m was an impressive performance. But with close to 60 per cent of sales related to the car industry, the group looks exposed in its core business. The US market is expected to be down 10 per cent in the first quarter and Europe is not likely to be far behind.

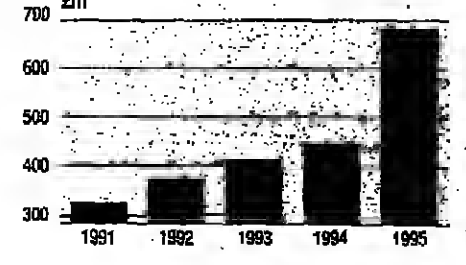
That and asbestos will continue to hit sentiment in the short term, even if T&N hits Merrill Lynch's £138m profit forecast this year. Down 6p at 165p, the shares, sitting on a meagre forward multiple of 10, are a raging buy only for the brave.

Cadbury Schweppes: at a glance

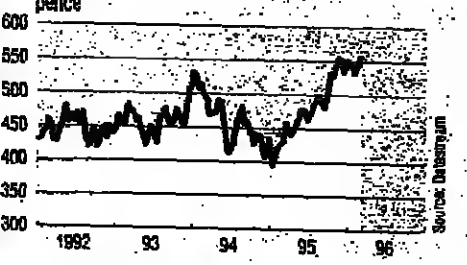
Market value: £5.5bn, share price 555p

Five year record	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Turnover (£bn)	3.2	3.4	3.7	4.0	4.8
Pre-tax profits (£m)	314.7	332.7	416.3	478	526
Earnings per share (pence)	26.4	26.8	29.3	30.2	31.3
Dividends per share (pence)	12.0	12.7	14.0	15.0	16.0

Marketing expenditure



Share price



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IN BRIEF

مكتبة الأصيل



COMMENT

The CBI's attack on Britain's Euro-muddle would be more convincing if the employers themselves were not so wholeheartedly behind the opt-out from the social chapter

No sulks, please, we're pro-Europe, says CBI

Who could Niall FitzGerald and the CBI possibly be talking about when they complain about extreme and emotive arguments over the future of the European Union, an absence of rational debate and a "fog of rhetoric" that obscures business priorities? The chairman-designate of Unilever, who also heads the CBI's Europe committee, yesterday ducked and weaved to avoid agreeing openly with suggestions that the employers were attacking John Major's government. After spending so much time over the last few months insisting on its political neutrality, the CBI could hardly make this a party political issue.

Yet it is difficult to see who else the employers meant in their catalogue of criticisms of British obscurantism, ignorance and muddle over the development of policy towards Europe, if it was not the government responsible for overseeing negotiations on the future shape of the union. The UK could only participate fully in political and economic decision-making if it re-establishes its credibility as a constructive force committed to the European Union, said the CBI, which went on to thump the table about how business had to make its views heard loudly and often in the run-up to the start of the inter-governmental conference later this month.

As for monetary union, Mr FitzGerald moaned that the issue obscured other European Union priorities to do with improving competitiveness, growth and employment

opportunities. EMU had "so hijacked the political debate here and elsewhere that there is almost a total absence of genuine understanding of the underlying economic arguments for and against," he said.

The occasion was the launch of a three-month education and lobbying campaign, *Business in Europe*, which Mr FitzGerald claimed would bring a "much needed clarity to the UK's Euro-vision."

It is certainly true that inward looking British squabbles about Europe are hard for continental managers to comprehend, especially in great pan-European multinationals such as Unilever. The message is that we have got to get in there and fight from the inside with real commitment and common sense. However, the CBI's attack on Britain's Euro-muddle would be more convincing if the employers themselves were not so wholeheartedly behind the opt-out from the social chapter. Whatever the rights and wrongs of social legislation in raising costs for business, the opt-out is a prime example of Britain's preference for sulking outside the ring rather than going inside to fight.

Evolution, rather than another Big Bang

The full folly of Michael Lawrence's crusade for a revolution in the way shares are traded in London has now been exposed. Listening to the bravura performance by the

sacked chief executive of the Stock Exchange before the Treasury select committee last week, it appeared that the UK market was crying out for the introduction of the sort of automated trading system which is common in all other international financial centres.

Unfortunately, Mr Lawrence claimed, the necessary process of change was mugged by a couple of macho market makers from BZW and Merrill Lynch (aka Smith New Court) who, seeking to protect their pockets, had the chief executive kicked out.

Well, the market has spoken, but the cacophony of discordant voices making themselves heard in the exchange's consultation programme, made public yesterday, hardly amounts to a tidal wave of sympathy for the Lawrentian cause.

Confusion, perplexity and a kaleidoscope of competing interests emerge - reflecting, only naturally, the huge diversity of needs among the exchange's members and users. Within this range of opinion can be found broad support for change, and for some form of order-driven trading. But it does not amount to the popular mandate for an order-driven revolution of the comprehensive Mr Lawrence had envisaged.

This is a withering indictment of the exchange's failure to build the case for change, a sad contrast with its conviction that the pressures for reform are widely recognised. The exchange clearly thinks the market making system has had its day. But it protests weakly that it could not go into the

world saying so, on the Gerald Ratner principle that if you call your own products crap, shareholders get upset and customers look elsewhere.

Mr Lawrence and friends have been calling the present system names and suffering the consequences. At the same time they have failed to prepare the ground for change. This risks precisely the market fragmentation the Stock Exchange fears most.

However, this is history, as is Mr Lawrence. The Exchange now has to negotiate with a new chart, difficult though it is to interpret on the basis of the survey.

Within this disarray lies an opportunity of sorts, which the exchange must exploit more sensitively than its past attempts at reform. The market consultation does reveal a mandate for change. There will be no Big Bang: evolution is the game, rather than revolution.

Exquisite timing from Mr Murdoch

Rupert Murdoch's push into continental pay-TV is, as is so often the case with the Dirty Digger, exquisitely timed. He has been on the run in Britain, following a fresh inquiry into his control of the UK pay-TV market and a bruising public debate over sport on TV. He seems far more welcome in Germany, where some of the continent's leading pay-TV companies have agreed to take his BSkyB on board.

The alliance of Kirch, Bertelsmann, and Canal Plus in Germany is a powerhouse. More interesting for the future, however, is yesterday's second bit of news from BSkyB: the formation of a strategic alliance with Bertelsmann, Canal Plus and Havas to develop digital pay-TV across Europe.

This is the growth area par excellence, although it will be hellishly expensive to develop and probably highly competitive. Better to do it with partners, then, as Murdoch is already doing in the US.

But don't expect this grand alliance to operate in the UK. BSkyB has no intention of giving up its near-monopoly, built up over the past five years and the source of so much of Mr Murdoch's UK profits. With subscription revenues approaching the £1bn mark, making BSkyB easily the largest European pay-TV broadcaster, he will not want to share these lush pickings with partners. That means BSkyB is likely to drag its feet on the introduction of digital satellite television here until really pushed. The company is doing just fine with analogue broadcasting.

When BSkyB does decide to switch to digital, it will want to do so on its own terms and at its own rate. That means using its proprietary encryption technology and maybe even launching its own satellite for digital transmissions to the UK. Joint venturing is an excellent strategy for expanding into continental Europe, but hardly necessary at home.

Mortgage lifeline for Lloyd's names

JOHN EISENHAMMER
Financial Editor

Lloyd's of London is planning a special mortgage facility for hard-bit names designed to help them stay living in their homes while being able to meet their final payment into the insurance market's recovery plan.

The facility is designed to overcome the difficulties most names would face because of their age and their need to raise a substantial amount against their homes.

All names have funds deposited at Lloyd's to cover their underwriting. In a significant number of cases these funds in effect amount to a pledge secured by a names' home. On Friday, Lloyd's is sending out individual interim statements to all 34,000 names, giving them a first estimate of what they must pay to re-insure all their liabilities into Equitas, the new company into which Lloyd's is giving off all the pre-1993, loss-making policies.

Some sort of Equitas premium, up to a maximum of £100,000 in a few thousand cases, will need to be paid by a majority of names, over and above their funds deposited at Lloyd's which will also be taken into account.

Although Lloyd's says it does not know how many names have pledged their homes as security, the number is believed to be significant. The idea of some form of mortgage deal to allow people to carry on living

in their homes while taking part in a final settlement of their Lloyd's affairs was first proposed by names representatives. It has been devised by specialist consultants and Lazard, the merchant bank, in conjunction with a small number of big mortgage lenders.

The scheme will reflect the fact that the average age of Lloyd's members is 58, and that they will not easily get 95 per cent mortgages elsewhere. But it will need a reasonably strong take-up to make the scheme feasible - in the order of £500m to £400m overall.

The planned facility will re-finance an existing mortgage and advance further amounts to meet equity bills. The maximum amount available will be limited to the lower of the Equitas premium plus any existing mortgage; 100 per cent of house value; or 3.75 times the applicant's annual income. The presence of a guarantor could enable larger sums to be raised.

Loans, which could be at a fixed rate, will generally mature in 25 years' time, irrespective of the age of borrower, with repayment arranged from life and pension policies or a special schedule. Under the plan, names would not be required to take out insurance cover beyond any existing policies they may hold. Names will be able to express their interest in the scheme in a questionnaire to be included with the interim Equitas premium statements.

IN BRIEF

Vickers profits soar to £75m

A 10 per cent rise in sales of Rolls-Royce cars helped Vickers, the defence and automotive giant, to a 67 per cent increase in pre-tax profits last year to £75m. The automotive division, which also includes specialist engine-maker Cosworth, saw profits almost double to £41m. Shrugging off production problems on the group's £1.5bn order for Challenger 2 tanks for the British Army, chief executive Sir Colin Chandler also dismissed renewed takeover speculation that has surrounded Vickers since late last year. The final dividend is increased to 4.3p, making 6.7p for the year.

House-building weakness continues

Private sector housing starts in January fell to their lowest level since November 1992. They declined to 9,400 from 10,900 in December, and were 16 per cent lower than a year earlier. Total housing starts, including local authority figures, were 11,100 compared with 14,300 a year earlier. Completions were up to 16,600 compared with 15,300. The figures confirmed the continuing weakness of house-building, one of the areas of the housing market that has yet to show any sign of recovery. Economists said bad weather and low confidence among builders explained the further decline.

Three more panels for Treasury

The Treasury announced yesterday that it has set up three new academic panels to provide sounding boards for work on labour markets, product markets and public services. They join its long-established panel of academic macro-economists and its high-profile panel of independent forecasters and newer industry panel. The new panels will each have a core of three academic members, though others will be invited to participate.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
BAT Industries (P)	(-)	2,384m (1.88m)	47.7p (40p)	24p (21.5p)
Century Schweppes (P)	4,770m (4.03m)	826m (478m)	27.3p (20.2p)	15p (15p)
Bata (P)	10,520m (5.68m)	2,500m (1.83m)	50.3p (43.6p)	45p (11p)
Commonwealth Group (P)	72.1m (58.7m)	21.4m (8.42m)	3.07p (2.01p)	0.25p (nil)
W&A (P)	2,080m (1.54m)	120m (10.7m)	13.3p (3.2p)	8p (10.85p)
Vickers (P)	1,140m (727m)	75m (44.8m)	15.6p (9.9p)	8.7p (4.75p)

(P) - Profit (L) - Loss (N) - New months * pro forma basis † for 18 months

BAT INDUSTRIES

"An Outstanding Year"

Preliminary results for the year to 31 December 1995

PRE-TAX PROFIT	£2,384m	+26%
EARNINGS PER SHARE	47.70p	+19%
DIVIDENDS PER SHARE	24.00p	+10%
Additional FID payment on 1995 final	3.6875p	

- Pre-tax profit increased 26 per cent, from £1,885 million to £2,384 million, 21 per cent after excluding last year's £191 million reorganisation provision and the impact of disposals.
- Quantum leap forward for tobacco. Profit of £1,561 million, up 54 per cent, or 29 per cent excluding 1994's provision for reorganising American Tobacco. Cigarette sales rose 18 per cent to 670 billion. World market share grew from 10.7 per cent to 12.4 per cent.
- Robust performance in financial services. Trading profit up 7 per cent at £1,052 million, breaking £1 billion profit barrier for first time. General business profit rose 14 per cent to £624 million. Profit of £428 million from life and investment business was flat.
- Base dividend for year up 10 per cent. Total dividends, including Foreign Income Dividend additional payment, up 14 per cent.
- "Whether measured by pre-tax profit, earnings or dividend, 1995 was an outstanding year for B.A.T Industries. By developing and concentrating our management skills in financial services and tobacco, we are determined to continue delivering superior total returns for shareholders, over the long term."

Lord Cairns, Chairman

Full financial statements for the year ended 31/12/95 will be delivered to the Registrar of Companies and carry an unqualified audit report.

The 1995 Annual Report is being posted to shareholders at the end of March. Copies of the preliminary announcement may be obtained from the Company Secretary, B.A.T Industries p.l.c., Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0NL.

market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3758.9 -18.2

FT-SE 250
4276.7 +4.5

FT-SE 350
1882.3 -6.7

SEAQ VOLUME
836.3m shares,
35,207 bargains

Gifts Index
93.74 -0.12

SHARE SPOTLIGHT

share price, pence

South West Water

SONDJFM

Water companies could be about to make a splash

TAKING STOCK

Water shares could be emerging from the lethargy which has left them the poor relations of the stock market.

Most utility action has been generated by the electricity, with bids, real and rumoured, creating sprays of excitement.

The main privatised water companies have been left out in the cold, with only one takeover bid to show between them.

Suspicion that their day will come created a swirl of interest. Thames, the biggest of them all, scored the best blue-chip gain of the day, up 15p at 535p in brisk trading.

The waters are offering some comforting dividend yields. Thames, for example, is on 5.8 per cent. They must look attractive against the returns offered by building societies.

But it was not merely solid investment attractions behind yesterday's gains.

South West Water jumped

30p to 538p on talk of a takeover splash. Anyone buying SWW could encounter regulatory problems.

It is Britain's highest-charging water authority and has been accused of wasting the contents of an entire reservoir during last year's drought. And it is one of four companies expected to experience drought problems this year.

Wessex Water, down 4p at 344p, is the favourite to swallow SWW although some believe a Continental predator could appear.

Anglian Water and Severn Trent were united to move ahead. United Utilities (water and electricity) rose 6p to 612p.

One of the industry's tiddlers, Brockhampton, improved 5p to 200p with Butterfield Securities, the stockbroker, saying buy.

Suggestions that the Government was about to clear the



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

generators' bids for Midlands Electricity and Southern Electric made little impression. Midlands fell 8p to 400p and Southern rose 8p to 866p.

Northern Electric gained 2p to 605p as analyst presentations got underway.

Yorkshire Electricity, the favourite for an electricity bid, fell another 10p to 793p.

The rest of the market had an uncertain session, flustered by Glaxo Wellcome's results.

The realisation that Glaxo could be forced into another big takeover bid to keep up its drugs momentum lowered the shares 44p to 876p. Zeneca, with the fastest organic growth of the drug majors, lost 14p to

1,281p although it is an obvious candidate for Glaxo. Cadbury Schweppes figures also disappointed: the shares fell 19p to 536p.

Guinness, strong recently, had a lively time. Stories flowed in early trading of a share buy-back or Guinness buying in the 20 per cent shareholding held by LVMH, the French group.

But an LVMH denial removed the froth and the shares ended 3p higher at 471p.

House of Fraser's boardroom changes were seen as inviting bid interest, lifting the shares 11p to 188p. Alders, also perceived as a bid candi-

date, gained 6p to 187p. BT tumbled 9p to 367.5p as the Government said it was thinking of encouraging more competition. Cable and Wireless fell 4p to 430p.

VisualAid, born out of the Samuelsoo film equipment division of tarnished Eagle Trust, reached 230p from its 185p placing price. Turnover was more than four million shares. Inn Business, the puts

chair which used to be called United Breweries, returned at 52p, a 4 per cent advance on the suspension level.

Blenheim, the exhibition group, jumped 26p to 372p after Panmure Gordon placed a 500,000 block which had hovered for some time.

Faber Prest, the distributor, crumpled 133p to 415p following a profit warning and Tracker Network, a car security group, reversed 120p to 635p; figures are due next month.

Takeover favourite Ladbroke, ahead of figures today, countered 4p higher at 184p.

Emrodise Electron, the electronic components group, grew tired of waiting for the signalled Elektrowatt sale of its 42 per cent stake, falling 12p to 298p. There were suggestions a deal Elektrowatt had agreed at 360p a share had been pulled.

House-builders strengthened on continuing hopes of an interest rate cut and NatWest Securities support. The investment house regards Bryant and Bellway as the best of the bunch.

Raine gained 4p to 19p as chairman Roy Barber purchased 500,000 shares at 15p and 16p.

Ingham rose 3p to 33p. Its plans to convert into an investment trust seem to be going ahead which means it will sell its car parts, spinning and property operations.

Jupiter Tyndall, the fund management group, controlled by Commerzbank of Germany, seems to be moving towards mounting a bid for Aberdeen Trust, up 5p at 127p.

Nearly a year after lifting its stake to 15 per cent, the Jupiter group has taken its interest to 29.32 per cent. It acquired shares from Scottish Value which had been regarded as a possible Abtrust predator.

Tullow Oil, with prized gas interests in Pakistan, jumped 3.5p to 79.5p in a sudden flurry of buying.

Stories flowing from Dublin suggested a bid was near with British Gas one of the names in the frame. The group's Pakistan interests are thought to be attracting envious glances. A power station drawing on Tullow's gas is planned.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: Ex: Exports; E: Earnings; S: Shares; U: Unlisted Securities Market; S: Suspended; P: Partly Paid; M: M Paid Shares.

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Seaq. Simply dial 0891 123 335, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 1233 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

FT-SE 100 - Real-time 00 Starting Rates 04 Price/earnings issues 36
UK Stock Market Report 01 Bullish Report 05 Water Shares 38
UK Company News 02 Bearish Report 06 Electricity Shares 40
Foreign Exchange 03 Tokyo Market 07 High Street Banks 41

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Call cost 30p per minute (cheap rate), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include VAT.

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
Shell	300,000	United	90,000	British	60,000	BT	50,000
British Gas	200,000	Wessex	80,000	Wessex	70,000	British	60,000
British Gas	100,000	Cable & Wireless	70,000	British	60,000	British	60,000
British Gas	100,000	BT	50,000	British	60,000	British	60,000
British Gas	100,000	BT	50,000	British	60,000	British	60,000

FT-SE 100 index hour by hour

Open 3778.8 up 15	11.00 3766.7 down 10.4	15.00 3766.6 down 11.5
09.00 3779.5 up 2.4	12.00 3785.0 down 12.1	16.00 3757.6 down 19.3
10.00 3771.6 down 5.5	13.00 3782.9 down 14.2	Close 3758.9 down 18.2

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: Ex: Exports; E: Earnings; S: Shares; U: Unlisted Securities Market; S: Suspended; P: Partly Paid; M: M Paid Shares.

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THE INDEPENDENT

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sport

Football in this country has not benefited but suffered from the interpretation of laws that Fifa ordered for the 1994 World Cup

Most of my younger colleagues, and even some older brethren who really should know better, never let any light fall on the fact that footballers of 20 and more years ago were generally tougher than the present crop of heroes.

Nobody has to take my word for this because proof is available weekly on the Sky Gold programme. *Bobby Charlton's Scrapbook*. The matches are in black and white but the colour blue, as in bruises, is never difficult to imagine.

The most recent offering featured Leeds United, circa 1970, and their Republic of Ireland international, John Giles, who was unquestionably one of the most skilful and combative inside-forwards of his generation.

When questioned by the programme's veteran presenter, Dickie Davis, and in common with all previous guests, Giles agreed immediately that the tackling was more hurtful in his time, and players had not yet developed the ultra-modern habit of going down as though picked off by a sniper.

Another point both Charlton and Giles made was that players were rarely booked – never mind sent off – which is the risk all of them today appear to be taking. "We did some bad things," Giles admitted, "but the unwritten rule was that you took knocks and got on with it."

A personal view, and no excuse is offered for returning to a recent theme, is that football in this country has not benefited but suffered from the interpretation of laws that Fifa ordered for the 1994 World Cup.

The result is that we have a version of the game quite a long way from what its inventors intended. Putting it bluntly, players are now frightened to tackle. The slightest mistake in application and timing leads to a yellow card and thus an inhibited performance. Having been introduced to this quite ludicrous restriction the audience reacts accordingly.

I will not bore you with the number of times I have recently discussed this with managers in the Premier and Endersleigh Leagues, but all agree that the approach demanded of referees



KEN JONES

by the four British associations, one that relates to retaining historical majority power as law-makers on the International Board, is to the game's long-term detriment.

The possibility that players on the

brink of suspension are instructed to invite cautions – the "tactical booking" implied this week by an official of the Football Association – so they will be available for important matches further up the line should not surprise anyone.

Confidence in referees is now running at such a low ebb that some clubs run thorough checks on their records. "It's important to know what we can expect," I was told this week. "For example, referees not far from retirement are less likely to go by the book and take notice of assessors than one who is trying to make an impression. We note how many yellow cards they've handed out, the number of dismissals. It's not a case of what we can get away

with but who is going to give the players a fair crack of the whip." It does not take much in the way of observation to realise that Eric Cantona, doubtless on the advice of Alex Ferguson, has hardly made a tackle since returning from suspension. Why risk the hair-trigger wrath of referees by attempting something you are not very good at is probably the instruction Manchester United's manager gave sensibly to the naturally aggressive Frenchman.

Going a little deeper into this, the difficulties and comparative lack of success experienced by British attackers when performing internationally is not mysterious. Barring the best teams, and despite what many of today's amateur tacticians

would have us believe, defensive play in the Premier League is pretty abysmal. The fear of being booked discourages defenders from marking properly and leads them into taking up false positions.

There are technical considerations but tackling is mainly about attitude, "wanting the ball," as I remember an old mentor saying. "When a player's attitude is poor, he's a liability. It's a matter of desire: there is a substantial case for overhauling the system."

An on-going truth about football is that there will always be people unhappy with the way things are proceeding. Trouble is that when it comes to the way referees are ordered to go about their work, there are more and more of them.

Thorpe to profit as middleman

Derek Pringle meets a batsman who has the technique to revive England

Like Rolex timepieces, the best left-handers have always appeared to impart grace and style. The sheer fluidity of Brian Lara's shots, the deft panache of John McClenaghan's groundstrokes and the effortless grace of a Ryan Giggs body-swing are typical of the elevated levels of sporting achievement which are rarely equaled by those doing things the other way round.

So it comes as some surprise to find a natty, dependable and thoroughly undemonstrative left-hander such as Graham Thorpe described as England's best batsman, an accolade graciously bestowed by none other than the England captain himself after the Surrey man's superb series against the West Indies, where Thorpe's aggregate of 506 runs was the highest ever made against them by an Englishman.

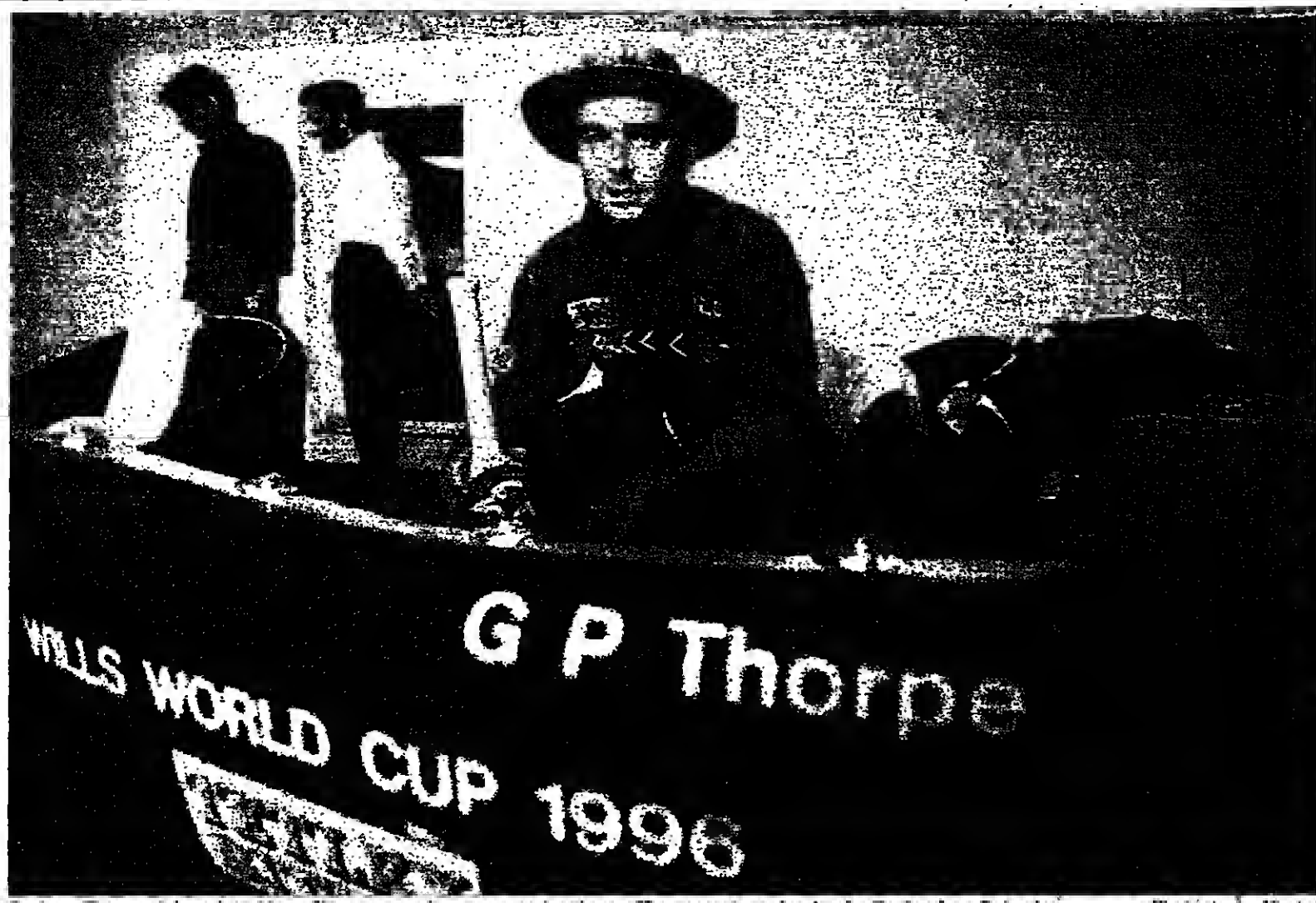
Unfortunately for Thorpe, now 26, it was a billing he did not quite live up to until the last few weeks of England's unhappy tour of South Africa. By then his upturn in form could not reverse England's slide towards meek surrender, as the final Test and one-day series were lost in a fortnight of wretched performances.

Happily, apart from the occasional looseness of bowel suffered by most on this trip, his form with the bat has remained reassuringly solid, and he is Eng-

land's leading run-scorer in the tournament, with 239 runs from three completed innings, as they go into Saturday's quarter-final against Sri Lanka in Faisalabad. But like the man himself, his undemonstrative batting in the middle of the innings goes on almost unnoticed. With its clever placements and cheeky running, Thorpe is a batsman whose shots seldom find their way on to the half-hour highlights. Instead, he accumulates his runs with the skill and savvy of a Javed Miandad, playing shots all round the wicket but rarely taking risks until the situation forces him to.

"It's more or less the role I play for Surrey," he said. "When I get in, I just look to play through the innings at someone near a run a ball, depending on the state of the game."

However, there are, he points out, glaring differences between the one-day cricket encountered here from the stereotypical stuff played at home. "For a start, we don't play any 50-over cricket, or any cricket at the moment that has field restrictions in the first 15 overs. It is such an important part of the competition over here, and yet we're still not sure what our best way of approaching it is. "That wouldn't have happened if we'd have been playing something similar domestically for the past five



Graham Thorpe dives into his coffin case as he prepares to shave off a premature demise by England on Saturday

years. If you can get off to a flyer, like the Sri Lankans have been doing, it makes the middle and death overs so much easier for the batsmen."

That is not the only factor Thorpe feels is disorienting England's batsmen at present. "At home you feel confident of chasing anything up to eight or nine an over. But here, with the ball getting soft, you wouldn't want to be chasing much more than six, so it's important to take advantage at the start."

"I've also noticed that you come up against bowlers here who are trying to get you out,

That's rarely the case in England where teams just try and contain in the hope the batsman will get himself out."

Part of England's problem is that they are not batting well as a unit and are without a clear match-winner with the bat. Mind you, only Dominic Cork, Thorpe's room-mate, was ever likely to be a contender, though his sore knee – a legacy of being overworked in South Africa – and a lack of swing with the new ball, have both conspired to reduce his firepower and confidence.

Repairing that confidence is

never easy, particularly when it has spread through a team and off days have become the norm. The situation is compounded when there is little prospect of a decent rest to break the sequence.

"When you lose nine one-day internationals out of your last 12, your conviction starts to go and you begin to lose belief in yourselves as a team," Thorpe said. "Part of the problem is that you are only ever as good as yesterday's match and players are constantly having to prove that they can play at this level."

"It is a pressure that builds

up quickly when the team does poorly, especially when you get heavily written down in the press. In the end you're frightened of taking any kind of risk, and you stop trying things that would be almost second nature when you're confident."

"It's difficult, but no one should be afraid of failure. New developments and techniques in one-day cricket move forward so fast that the game is always going to be part gamble anyway, and that tends to favour the bold."

For England to go further than Faisalabad, Thorpe stress-

es the need to remain positive and learn from what has gone before. "South Africa got hammered over here not so long ago, but they've managed to turn that round to their advantage. That's what we've got to do."

There is no doubt that Sri Lanka are cock-a-hoop with confidence at the moment, after their recent run-scoring bonanzas, and many people are expecting us to be going home on Sunday. But if we really believe we can win, we will. And if we do, it'll be just the boost we need for the semi-final in front of 100,000 in Calcutta."

Lloyd to restore W Indies prestige

TONY COZIER

reports from Bridgetown, Barbados

In his moment of despair, West Indies cricket has turned to salvation to the man who led it through the worst period of its history.

In the wholesale change of leadership that has included the resignations of the captain, Richie Richardson, and the board president, Peter Short, Clive Lloyd has been summoned and given the post of team coach instead of Andy Roberts.

Lloyd, now 52, will be at the side of the new captain, Courtney Walsh, charged with more than just offering technical advice on how to counter Shane Warne's flippant or restrict Sachin Tendulkar's scoring.

Lloyd's responsibility is nothing less than restoring the prestige of West Indies cricket that has taken such a battering on and off the field this year.

The team has been given with internal dissent and indiscipline that has effectively driven the two Benjamins, Winston and Kenny, out of Test cricket. There have even been splits within the administration itself.

The problems have given rise to a string of embarrassing defeats – to last-placed Sussex by an innings last summer, by an Australian Academy team of teenagers last November, and most shockingly, by the unheard-of club cricketers of Kenya at the World Cup.

Among cricketers' enemies as politicians, Lloyd is a vengeful but fragile asset. Lloyd spectacularly succeeded in maintaining it through his 10 years as captain, creating a record unmatched by anyone else – 36 wins and a mere 12 defeats in 76 Tests.

There was a powerful lobby for Lloyd to be made manager immediately he played his last Test in 1985 but, Viv Richards, his proud successor, refused to be named. It was four years before Lloyd came to the post, on tour of Australia in 1989-90 and in the Caribbean against England in 1990.

The West Indies kept on winning but, for reasons that are still unclear, Lloyd was replaced by Lance Gibbs. He moved back to England and became deeply involved with his old county Lancashire and with the wider West Indian community. More recently he has been an international Cricket Council match referee, as he now is in the World Cup, and a virtual roving ambassador for the game.

He has only been occasionally spotted in the Caribbean and a barrier seemed to have been built between himself and the West Indies Cricket Board of Control for which there can be no other explanation than the insularity and xenophobia that still condition thinking in these tiny states.

Sri Lankans set run record

World Cup round-up
RUPERT METCALF

The preliminary skirmishes are over – now the real combat begins. After 28 qualifying matches – some exciting, some humdrum, some almost insignificant – and two forfeits, the World Cup reaches the quarter-final stage this weekend.

Yesterday's three concluding group matches produced no surprises but they did set up one potentially volatile quarter-final that will eclipse the other three in terms of public attention in the subcontinent. India will meet Pakistan in Bangalore in a day/night match on Saturday, after the Pakistanis beat New Zealand by 46 runs in Lahore.

Elsewhere, the Sri Lankans thrashed Kenya by 144 runs in Kandy and, as they knew before yesterday's game, will journey to Faisalabad to play England on Saturday, while India beat Zimbabwe by 44 runs in Kanpur. The other two quarter-finals take place on Monday: South Africa meet the West Indies in

Karachi and, in Madras, Australia take on New Zealand in another day/night encounter.

Yesterday's outstanding achievement came from the run-happy Sri Lankan team. Once again, Kent's Aravinda de Silva led the way with a spectacular 145 as Sri Lanka reached 398 for 5 in their 50 overs – the highest total yet recorded in a one-day international. Kenya, still on a high after their dramatic victory over the West Indies last week, responded bravely to make 254 for 7 in 50 overs, of which the highlight was a brisk 96 by Steve Tikolo.

Sri Lanka's total beat the previous best for a limited-overs international: 363 for 7 in 55 overs by England against Pakistan at Trent Bridge in 1992. It also surpassed the previous World Cup record total of 360 for 4 by the West Indies against Sri Lanka at Karachi in 1987.

De Silva, who struck five sixes and 14 fours in his 145 off 115 balls, became the first Sri Lankan to score a century in the World Cup. His innings was also the highest by a Sri Lankan in one-day internationals, surpassing Sanath Jayasuriya's 140 against South Africa in Bloemfontein in 1994/95.

The Pakistanis were hugely relieved to hear that their captain, Wasim Akram, should be fit for Saturday's meeting with their neighbours and great rivals, India. The Lancashire all-rounder strained a side muscle going for a quick single while batting and did not bowl later in the game, but said afterwards that he had been cleared to play in the quarter-final.

Pakistan, put in by New Zealand, reached 281 for 5, with Saeed Anwar the top scorer with a hard-hit 62. Danny Morrison limped off with a groin strain after bowling just two overs and could not bat later as New Zealand's innings was curtailed on 235 for 9.

After 424 runs in four matches, Sachin Tendulkar was due a failure. It arrived yesterday when he made just three in India's total of 247 for 5, but Vinod Kambli made amends with a measured 106. Zimbabwe could not recover from a middle-order collapse and were dismissed for 207.

World Cup update

Group A

India v Zimbabwe

Kanpur (Day/Night match) India won by 40 runs.

Group B

Pakistan v New Zealand

Lahore (Day/Night match) Pakistan won by 46 runs.

Group C

South Africa v West Indies

Port of Spain (Day/Night match) South Africa won by 100 runs.

Group D

England v Sri Lanka

Faisalabad (Day/Night match) Sri Lanka won by 144 runs.

Group E

Australia v Kenya

Madras (Day/Night match) Australia won by 144 runs.

Group F

India v Sri Lanka

Bangalore (Day/Night match) India won by 44 runs.

Group G

South Africa v Sri Lanka

Port of Spain (Day/Night match) South Africa won by 100 runs.

Group H

England v Sri Lanka

Faisalabad (Day/Night match) Sri Lanka won by 144 runs.

Group I

Australia v Kenya

Madras (Day/Night match) Australia won by 144 runs.

Group J

India v Sri Lanka

Bangalore (Day/Night match) India won by 44 runs.

Group K

South Africa v Sri Lanka

Port of Spain (Day/Night match) South Africa won by 100 runs.

Group L

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Faisalabad (Day/Night match) Sri Lanka won by 144 runs.

Group M

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Group N

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Group O

South Africa v Sri Lanka

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Mercantile Credit	19.9%	£118.10	£5,668.80	£254.88	19.9%	£206.68	£9,920.64	£254.88	
TSB Bank plc	18.9%	£116.33	£5,583.84	£169.92	16.9%	£197.40	£9,475.20	£169.92	
The Royal Bank of Scotland plc	18.7%	£116.00	£5,568.00	£154.88	17.5%	£199.32	£9,567.36	£154.88	

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